

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-934 (Rev. 12-2015)

OMB Control No. 1024-0276 (Exp. 01/31/2019)

PAN AMERICAN UNION HEADQUARTERS

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1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Pan American Union Headquarters

Other Name/Site Number: Organization of American States Building and Art Museum of the Americas

Street and Number (if applicable): 17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW (Pan American Union Building)
201-203 18th Street NW (Annex/Art Museum of the Americas; Casita:
Museum Administration Building)

City/Town: Washington

County: N/A

State: N/A

2. SIGNIFICANCE DATA

NHL Criteria: 1, 4

NHL Criteria Exceptions: n/a

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design
VIII. Changing Role of the United States in the World Community
1. International Relations
3. Expansionism and Imperialism

Period(s) of Significance: 1908–1967

Significant Person(s) (only Criterion 2):

Cultural Affiliation (only Criterion 6):

Designer/Creator/Architect/Builder: Architects/Engineers

Albert Kelsey and Paul Cret, Associated Architects
William Copeland Furber, Consulting Engineer

Builder/Supplier

Norcross Brothers Company
Turner Construction Company

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. We are collecting this information under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461-467) and 36 CFR part 65. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to evaluate properties nominated as National Historic Landmarks. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned Control No. 1024-0276.

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Atlantic Terra Cotta Company
Enfield Pottery and Tile Works

Sculptors & Craftsmen:

Gutzon Borglum, Solon Borglum, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, Sally
James Farnham, Isidore Konti, Herbert Adams, Chester Beach, Rudolph
Evans, and Robert Aitken
D'Ascenzo Studios, stained glass
Samuel Yellin, iron craftsman
J. H. Dulles Allen, potter

Historic Contexts:

American Latinos and the Making of the United States (2013)
XVI. Architecture
M. Period Revival
7. Renaissance

3. WITHHOLDING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Does this nomination contain sensitive information that should be withheld under Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

☐ Yes

☒ No

4. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. **Acreage of Property:** Five acres

2. **Use either Latitude/Longitude Coordinates or the UTM system:**

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Latitude: 38.892227

Longitude: 77.039518

OR

UTM References: **Zone** **Easting** **Northing**

3. **Verbal Boundary Description:** The boundary is the five-acre parcel in northwest Washington, DC, bounded by C Street to the north, 17th Street to the east, Constitution Avenue to the south, Virginia Avenue to the southwest, and 18th Street to the west.

4. **Boundary Justification:** This boundary encompasses the original five-acre parcel historically associated with the Pan American Union Building and acquired for the construction of the headquarters in 1907. This includes the former annex (museum building), pool, former garage (museum administration building), and grounds.

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5. SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

...may all the Americas come to feel that for them this place is home, for it is theirs, the product of a common effort and the instrument of a common purpose.

*Secretary of State Elihu Root
Cornerstone speech, May 11, 1908¹*

The Pan American Union Building in Washington, DC, has exceptional national significance under National Historic Landmark (NHL) Criteria 1 and 4. Under NHL **Criterion 1** the property outstandingly represents the institutional expression of Pan Americanism, a late nineteenth-century United States-led movement meant to organize the republics of the Western Hemisphere into an international cooperative body. The building served as the headquarters of a hemisphere-wide regional organization of American states that originated in 1890 and became the hemisphere's foremost center of diplomacy, still in operation today. Treaties and laws crafted by the organization set standards for the conduct of international relations between the United States and Latin America as they strove for peace and security, conflict resolution, and nonintervention. No other building in America more perfectly embodies the aspirations of the Pan American movement, the development of an inter-American system, and the progression of international relations among the nations of the Americas.

Under NHL **Criterion 4** the Pan American Union Building has exceptional value as one of the most significant Beaux-Arts buildings in the United States. It possesses important associations with the nationally significant career of noted architect Paul Philippe Cret (1876–1945) and is an exceptional illustration of Pan American civic architecture. Designed by Cret in association with architect Albert Kelsey, the building is recognized as a pivotal design within Cret's body of work. As his first major public commission and the result of an open design competition, it was singled out by the American Institute of Architects as the building that best characterizes Cret's Beaux-Arts classical work. The design, pioneering in its use of motifs representing North and South America, is unparalleled in its synthesis of Beaux-Arts architecture and allegorical references using Aztec, Incan, and Mayan iconography. Together with its Mediterranean-style 1912 Annex and its "Blue Aztec" garden setting, the Pan American Union Building symbolizes the unity of the Western Hemisphere that the United States championed as part of the Pan American concept.²

The **period of significance** begins in 1908 when construction of the Pan American Union Building began and ends in 1967 with the close of the Pan American movement and the commencement of a new age in international relations. During these six decades the inter-American system evolved within two major phases. Between 1910 and 1948, under the name of the Union of American Republics, the organization formed the principles used to guide the system's goals of maintaining peace and security, nonintervention, and conflict resolution. Between 1948 and 1967, the Organization of American States (OAS) replaced the Union of

¹ Quoted in John Barrett, *The Pan American Union: Peace, Friendship, and Commerce* (Washington, DC: Pan American Union, 1911), 205.

² Robert Alexander González, *Designing Pan-America: U.S. Architectural Visions for the Western Hemisphere*, Roger Fullington Series in Architecture (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2011), vii, foreword by Robert W. Rydell, and xii, preface by Robert Alexander González. The nomination author extends appreciation to National Park Service staff Kathryn Smith for locating this important resource and providing overall guidance to the nomination, and Lauren Hughes for identifying a myriad of newspaper and journal articles on the history of the Pan American Union and the Organization of American States.

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American Republics and operated under a reorganized postwar system. In 1967, a charter amendment created a new structure for the OAS to pursue its new goals and expanded role in international diplomacy. Between October 2, 1889, and April 19, 1890, delegates from seventeen Latin American countries and the United States met in Washington, DC and initiated the modern Pan American movement. Throughout the course of its history, the movement's effectiveness has been closely tied to the United States' involvement. First, the location and construction of its ornate headquarters in Washington, DC, was championed by the United States government through the secretary of state. In his role as chairman of the organization's Governing Board, Secretary of State Elihu Root solicited funding from noted American industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. The US government played another crucial role by purchasing the land where the building would be constructed. Thereafter, architects participating in the design competition were challenged to design a building in the nation's capital to house a recently formed and unique institution conceived as part trade agency, part Latin American library, and part symbol of inter-American cooperation and friendship. Placed on a prominent site near the White House and the National Mall, the building's location and architecture announced the legitimacy of this new experiment in hemispheric diplomacy. Thus, the Pan American Union Building reflects the movement's origins in its very creation.

From the start of the organization, American hegemony and interventionist policies in Central and South American nations caused discord among the participating countries. Latin American efforts to resist intervention, ultimately led to the complex evolution of an inter-American system, a label that arose in the late 1920s to define the various principles, agreements, and structures that bound together the American republics. The Pan American Union Building served as a place for high-level diplomatic meetings, and from where organizational leaders set international agendas, implemented policy, and arbitrated conflicts.

This nomination begins with a background section that describes events leading up to and including the 1889 to 1890 meeting between Latin American and US delegates in Washington, DC. That meeting created the International Union of American Republics and led directly to the organization's decision in 1906 to construct the Pan American Union Building. The historic context is then divided into two parts. The first section covers Criterion 1 and the creation and evolution of the inter-American system within its two major phases of 1910 to 1948 and 1948 to 1967. It specifically focuses on milestones in American foreign policy, and Latin American reaction thereto, that are credited with the system's origin and growth. The second section covers Criterion 4 and the design competition of the Pan American Union Building and Paul Cret's significance within the history of the Beaux-Arts movement in America. Lastly, the physical description and statement of integrity section covers the Pan American Union Building's composition and decorative elements along with its "Aztec garden" setting, comprised of the former Director General's Mediterranean-style residence and a blue-tiled pool, which collectively make the property a home for the Americas.

PROVIDE RELEVANT PROPERTY-SPECIFIC HISTORY, HISTORICAL CONTEXT, AND THEMES. JUSTIFY CRITERIA, EXCEPTIONS, AND PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE LISTED IN SECTION 2.

BACKGROUND: PRELUDE TO PAN AMERICANISM, 1820s–1890

An Early Pan American Ideal

The concept of Pan Americanism has early nineteenth-century origins in Latin America and the United States. In Latin America, Venezuelan military and political leader Simón Bolívar is credited with Pan American's

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intellectual creation.³ In 1826, he convened the Congress of Panama, the historic first meeting of the newly independent nations of Latin America, to support democracy. Three successive Spanish-American Congresses in Lima (1847–1848), Santiago de Chile (1856), and Lima (1864–1865) shaped what some called a Pan American movement for peaceful exchange in the hemisphere. The movement remained solely Spanish-American in membership.

The United States did not attend any of these conferences and rejected a hemispheric alliance promoted by some Latin American leaders. Instead, the country pursued a unilateral US hemispheric policy. President James Monroe, in his annual message to Congress on December 2, 1823, issued a warning to Europe to neither colonize nor invade American nations. The administration viewed European commerce as a major barrier to advancing the country's trading ties throughout the region to its south. It wanted no European interference in the affairs of either the newly independent Latin American states or potential United States territories. Although a unilateral principle, the warning, which became known as the Monroe Doctrine, implied the fundamentals of Pan Americanism as a special relationship with Latin America, a separate hemispheric system of nations to be guarded and fostered by the United States. The doctrine would become an enduring principle of United States foreign policy.

Through the mid-1860s, US officials mostly used the doctrine conservatively within the North American continent and shied away from using force. Following the Civil War a slow transformation took place as US power developed. A financial crisis beginning in 1873 prompted many North Americans to look southward for markets to consume the nation's excess industrial and agricultural goods. As the era of political Reconstruction came to an end in 1877, an interest in developing commerce around the world paired with an American foreign policy concern over the potential transfer to Europe of Cuba, Puerto Rico, or territory in Central America ultimately resulted in the birth of the Pan American movement.⁴

The Founding of Modern Pan Americanism, October 2, 1889–April 19, 1890

In contrast to the early Pan American ideal, the Pan American movement of the 1880s advocated universal hemispheric membership. In 1881, Secretary of State James G. Blaine made Pan Americanism a domestic issue. His proposal, like the principles of the Monroe Doctrine, stressed a dominant US role to achieve peace in the hemisphere. In Blaine's opinion, the United States needed "to protect and lead its 'sister' nations of the New World by establishing an informal political alliance and commercial union."⁵ He issued an invitation to the independent Latin American countries to convene in Washington "for the purpose of considering and discussing the methods of preventing war between the nations of America." In particular, he hoped to settle territorial disagreements between Mexico and Guatemala and between Chile and Peru. Following President James Garfield's assassination on July 2, 1881, President Chester Arthur retracted the invitations.⁶

Nonetheless, Congress continued to pursue Pan American commercial relations in an attempt to relieve the economic recession that lasted from 1882 to 1885. This strategy was summed up in April 1888 by one congressman who stated that the South American continent was "the largest and most inviting field for

³ Bolívar is attributed with the liberation from Spanish domination of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Panama.

⁴ Walter LaFeber, "The Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine from Monroe to Reagan," in *Redefining the Past: Essays in Diplomatic History in Honor of William Appleman Williams*, ed. Lloyd C. Gardner (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1986), 129.

⁵ Joseph Smith, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Latin American Relations* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), xxxvi.

⁶ Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 283; Brian Loveman, *No Higher Law: American Foreign Policy and the Western Hemisphere Since 1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 133–34. Garfield actually died in December.

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enterprise on earth.... It is the only great market left for our surplus products. We can and ought to have it.”⁷ Bipartisan bills approved by a joint House-Senate conference produced an act of Congress (McCreary-Frye Act) instructing the president to invite Latin American governments to an international conference in Washington in 1889. The conference’s purpose under President Grover Cleveland, however, changed from the deterrence of war to the advancement of trade, a view supported by elites in the United States as a way to build a natural market for their American exports.

In October 1889, delegates from the seventeen independent Latin American nations attended the conference of American states.⁸ Although Blaine had once again become secretary of state under President Benjamin Harrison, primary organizing duties fell to William E. Curtis, a Chicago journalist who had traveled extensively in Latin America as the US special commissioner to Central and South America. The contrasting aspirations for the Pan American forum are visible in the makeup of the attendees: all the Latin American delegates were diplomats; eight out of ten American delegates were industrialists. While the United States wanted to expand commerce, Latin America wanted to convince the United States to relinquish its right to intercede in the internal and foreign affairs of their countries. The commercial nature of the conference is also evidenced in its structure. Following the opening ceremony, participants embarked on a six-thousand-mile, six-week railroad tour of industries in New England, Chicago, and St. Louis.⁹

Back in Washington, the conference addressed issues regarding peace, trade, and communications. Although no resolutions emerged from these discussions, the conference could claim one achievement. In their final act, on the last day of the conference, April 14, 1890, the delegates created the International Union of American Republics as a rudimentary overall system with an administrative office, the Commercial Bureau of American Republics (later, the Pan American Union), tasked with “the prompt collection and distribution of commercial information.” In addition, a new inter-American system of numbered regular international meetings would become known as the International Conference of American States.¹⁰ The meeting in Washington constituted the first meeting of the series.

The commercial bureau moved into a rented townhouse in Washington, DC, the sole capital where all the American republics had diplomatic representatives. Located within sight of the White House, it was administered by the Department of State and overseen by the secretary of state. Curtis became its first director (until May 1893) with a staff of ten.¹¹ According to the bureau’s first annual report in 1891, many then viewed it as a purely US creation, lacking in any provision for Latin American management or participation in bureau activities. Furthermore, the bulk of the bureau’s daily activity and many of its contacts were predictably with US business leaders and companies rather than from distant Latin America. This emphasis changed somewhat beginning April 1, 1896, when Latin American diplomatic representatives began to meet regularly with the

⁷ Joseph Smith, “The First Conference of American States (1889–1890) and the Early Pan American Policy of the United States,” in *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, ed. David Sheinin (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000), 22.

⁸ The nations included Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

⁹ G. Pope Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 398. Curtis served as secretary of the 1884–1885 Latin American Trade Commission. Smith, “First Conference of American States,” 24.

¹⁰ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 86; Smith, *Historical Dictionary*, xxxvii. In 1894, efforts to end the bureau by Democratic politicians failed because the conference delegates had established the bureau for a ten-year period during which no members could withdraw. Smith, “First Conference of American States,” 29.

¹¹ Elizabeth Greenwell Grossman, *The Civic Architecture of Paul Cret* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31. The organization’s address given in the competition announcement, No. 2 Jackson Place, is now 700 Jackson Place NW. Adin Benedict Lacey, ed. and comp., *American Competitions* (Philadelphia: T Square Club, 1907), xxi, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015012319318;view=1up;seq=34;size=150>. An Executive Committee met once a month to administer and supervise the bureau. Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 398.

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secretary of state in an assembly later organized as the Governing Board. Nevertheless, U.S. control over the agency deepened with its proviso that the secretary of state would always chair the Governing Board and a US citizen would always serve as the bureau's director. In reality, the political consensus that had formed during the 1880s and resulted in the Washington conference declined during the 1890s. Even so, the fact that the Washington conference had even convened revealed the preeminent political and economic sway the United States held in the hemisphere and its ability to alter the historical pattern of inter-American relations.¹²

The Second International Conference of American States took place in Mexico City in 1902. Topics went beyond commerce and the exchange of information to items such as arbitration procedures and the problems of hemispheric peace. As a result, the conference renamed the administrative Commercial Bureau of the American Republics (future Pan American Union) to the International Bureau of the American Republics to better reflect its function as an intergovernmental agency overseeing issues other than trade.¹³ Direction for the bureau officially transferred from the US secretary of state to the Governing Board which was charged with preparing agendas for the international conferences.

The conference also established the Columbus Memorial Library, a division of the Bureau of American Republics. The concept of a library, then called the Library of Columbus, had initially come up at the First International Conference (1889–1890) to meet the bureau's purpose of collecting and distributing commercial information and to serve as the custodian of the archives of the International Conferences of American States. Although the project was not officially implemented, the director of the bureau began a collection for its use. After the library officially came to fruition at the 1902 conference, its first librarian, Cuban scholar José Ignacio Rodríguez, earnestly began the collection process. A staff of editors, translators, librarians, and specialists worked to disseminate information, while representatives handled diplomatic functions.

A New Building

The Third International Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1906 expanded the bureau's functions and resolved to continue the union and the bureau which represented it.¹⁴ Delegates at this conference also expressed the hope that their next conference would be housed in a way to permit it to meet its lofty and admirable functions. The bureau's operations in the rented townhouse had exceeded available space and it became an organizational goal to build a larger headquarters. The US government took the lead to acquire a site and pursue construction funds through philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. On December 4, 1906, secretary of state and chairman of the bureau's Governing Board, Elihu Root, wrote Carnegie of the excellent work the bureau carried out between the international conferences and the need for a building that could reflect "the magnitude and dignity of the great work to be done."¹⁵ His words exemplify the bureau's multiple tasks:

...to give effect to the work of the Conference, to carry out its resolutions, to prepare the work of further conferences, to disseminate through each American country a knowledge of the affairs the sentiments and the progress of every other American country, to promote better communication and more constant intercourse, to increase the interaction among all the Republics of each upon the others in commerce, in education, in the arts and sciences, and in political and social life; and to maintain in the city of Washington a headquarters, a meeting

¹² Smith, "The First Conference of American States," 27, 30; Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 398.

¹³ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 398.

¹⁴ Ibid., 398–99. The board established a supervisory committee to exercise control over the bureau between its sessions.

¹⁵ Mr. Elihu Root to Mr. Andrew Carnegie in Lacey, *American Competitions*, xxv. A copy of Root's letter was included as an appendix in the Program and Conditions of the design competition for the building.

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place, a center of influence for the same peaceful and enlightened thought and conscience of all America.¹⁶

Andrew Carnegie responded with \$750,000 to build what he called an “American Temple of Peace.”¹⁷ In 1907, the State Department paid Columbian College (today’s George Washington University) \$200,000 for the former Van Ness estate, a private residence built in 1813–1816 at the intersection of 17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW. The neglected home was razed in 1908 for the future Pan American Union Building.¹⁸ The other twenty countries contributed a bit over \$50,000 each for a total investment in the property of one million dollars. The new building’s location was of the utmost importance both politically and geographically. It placed the bureau close to the secretary of state’s office and the nation’s foreign policy sphere.

¹⁶ Root to Carnegie in Lacey, *American Competitions*, xxv.

¹⁷ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 31.

¹⁸ Kent Boese, “Lost Washington: The Van Ness House,” *Greater Greater Washington*, August 11, 2009, <http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/3182/lost-washington-the-van-ness-house/>.

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CRITERION 1: THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM & THE UNION OF AMERICAN REPUBLICS, 1910–1948

...to maintain in the city of Washington a headquarters, a meeting place, a center of influence for the same peaceful and enlightened thought and conscience of all America.¹⁹

Elihu Root

On April 26, 1910, dignitaries from the United States and Latin America gathered at a prominent site near the White House to dedicate the new headquarters of the International Union of American Republics and its secretariat, the International Bureau of American Republics (soon to be renamed the Pan American Union). Guests spoke glowingly of the building as a home of the Americas. For the next six decades, the building would be associated with the uneven history of inter-American relations and today represents a pivotal period in Western Hemispheric relations between 1910 and 1948 in which the United States conceded to nonintervention. The Pan American Union Building is exceptionally significant at the national level as the tangible evidence of the emerging inter-American institution, as well as the site of important meetings, policymaking, and research that defined diplomatic relations in the Western Hemisphere.

From the first International Conference of American States (1889–1890) to World War II, nonintervention was the dominant concern of Latin America, particularly when it came to the United States. During this time, the United States and Latin America sought to enhance commercial relations and define a system for the peaceful settlement of disputes. But when it came to a regional mutual security arrangement, the United States pursued a unilateral method opposed by Latin America. Highlights of the period defined by US foreign policy include the Roosevelt Corollary (1904), Dollar Diplomacy (1909–1913), and lastly, the Good Neighbor policy (1933–1954) of multilateral engagement with Latin America.

Until the end of World War II, the inter-American system primarily revolved around the International Conferences of American States that had begun with the first meeting in Washington, DC. Between 1910 and 1948, the conference would meet in Latin America nine times. The Union of American Republics continuously refined its available legal instruments and developed new ones. These and other activities formed a framework for the inter-American system's goals of attaining peace and security, nonintervention, and conflict resolution among its member states. Scholars divide this period into two parts: 1910 to 1928, a period of conflicts and conciliations, and 1928 to 1948, a period of good neighbors and nonintervention.

1910-1928, Conflicts & Conciliations (Fourth to Sixth International Conferences)

In August 1910, the Fourth International Conference of American States in Buenos Aires made two name changes to its organization and secretariat. The International Union of American Republics simply became the Union of American Republics, and its secretariat, the International Bureau of the American Republics, became the Pan American Union. Also, Latin American governments resolved to make the U.S.-dominated Pan American Union into a truly international institution. They turned their attention to the Governing Board, proposing that a senior Latin American diplomat preside in the event the U.S. secretary of state was absent from a board meeting. Diplomat and delegate Henry White, who headed the U.S. delegation to the conference, wrote Secretary of State Philander Knox (1909–1913) that this change “is of no consequence, as of course when there

¹⁹ Resolution of the Governing Board and Letter of the Secretary of State, Mr. Elihu Root to Mr. Andrew Carnegie, December 4, 1906, in Lacey, *American Competitions*, xxv.

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is any business of importance the secretary of state would naturally attend; whereas in the absence of such business it is as well that Latin-America should be flattered by the chairmanship’.”²⁰

Latin American concerns over a U.S.-dominated system had intensified earlier with what became known as the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt, concerned that a crisis between Venezuela and its creditors could spur an invasion of that nation by European powers, saw U.S. intervention as the only viable solution. In a letter he wrote: “it is our duty, when it becomes absolutely inevitable, to police these countries in the interest of order and civilization’.”²¹ In a distortion of the Monroe Doctrine, the Roosevelt Corollary of December 1904 stated that the United States would intervene as a last resort when a nation in the Western Hemisphere had not met its obligations to international creditors over concerns that nonpayment could invite foreign aggression harmful to all the American nations. As the corollary worked out in practice, the United States increasingly used military force to restore internal stability to nations in the region, the first being in the Dominican Republic in 1904, and later in Haiti and Nicaragua.

The next administration under President William Howard Taft (1909–1913) followed a foreign policy of “Dollar Diplomacy” in which the United States had an obligation to ensure Latin Americans paid their debts. It meant using U.S. dollars to advance the political goals of the United States. It succeeded in Nicaragua, but failed to offset economic instability in Guatemala and Honduras. Warnings on the negative aspect of enforcing versions of the Monroe Doctrine came from outside the political bureaucracy. In 1913, Monroe Doctrine scholar Hiram Bingham stated, the “new Monroe Doctrine will earn us the increasing hatred of our neighbors.”²²

At this time, interest in Pan Americanism had declined. Its major supporter, Elihu Root, was no longer in office and the Taft administration saw no reason to maintain U.S. support.²³ Furthermore, the next international conference set for 1915 was delayed by World War I and thirteen years passed before another conference convened in 1923. In between, the Wilson administration (1914–1921) supervised the most active period of military intervention in the history of U.S.-Latin American relations. Under the guise of the Roosevelt Corollary, and not relations between the Western Hemisphere and Europe, the United States intervened militarily in Nicaragua in 1912 to protect American interests during an attempted revolution, in Haiti due to instability in 1915, and in Cuba from 1917 to mid-1919 during a period of civil unrest. Thus, the doctrine’s original intent for the United States to confront possible European incursions in Latin American revolutions was converted to direct U.S. intervention in the revolutions themselves. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes recognized the outcome of this shift in inter-American relations. In the one-hundred-year recognition of the Monroe Doctrine he stated that the “great republics [of the south]... look with apprehension at the expansion...and formidable strength of the Republic of the North.”²⁴

In the 1920s, the Union of American Republics’ primary objectives were to prevent conflicts and to perfect procedures for conciliation and arbitration.²⁵ Latin America used the International Conferences as a means for advancing equality and nonintervention in the hemisphere community. On the other hand, Washington policy

²⁰ Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 284. The correspondence from White to Knox was dated October 22, 1910.

²¹ Ibid., 183. This was a letter from Roosevelt to William Bayard Hale, a journalist, dated February 26, 1904. In this letter, Roosevelt referred to “the weak and chaotic governments and people south of us.”

²² LaFeber, “Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine,” 133. From 1910 until World War I, the Union of American Republics emphasized the expansion of trade and the protection of trademarks.

²³ Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 284.

²⁴ LaFeber, “Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine,” 133.

²⁵ Carlos O. Stoetzer, *The Organization of American States*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 293. Stoetzer was Professor Emeritus of History at Fordham University and from 1950–1961 he served as an OAS staff member in Washington, DC.

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makers arranged conference agendas to elude political issues and the question of nonintervention in favor of less volatile economic, scientific, and cultural issues.²⁶ A Western Hemisphere jointly committed to peace and cooperation proved elusive.

Latin American nations increasingly distressed with the direction of Pan Americanism seized the opportunity to express their disapproval of U.S. dominance of the inter-American system at the Fifth International Conference held in Santiago, Chile (1923). Their persistence resulted in two outcomes. The first made it possible for Latin American delegates to have a leadership role in the organization when the conference agreed that the Governing Board would elect its chairman, thereby replacing the U.S. secretary of state as the permanent chair. The second produced a treaty to advance the settlement of conflicts. The Gondra Treaty stipulated that controversies unresolved through diplomacy would be submitted for investigation and arbitration by a five-member commission. The need for further refinement of the treaty led to the **International Conference of Conciliation and Arbitration** held in the Pan American Union Building from December 10, 1928, to January 5, 1929. Documents produced at the conference required that all disputes follow the procedure of conciliation and that all decisions were final.²⁷

Latin American hostility over U.S. intervention came up once again at the Sixth International Conference held in Havana, Cuba, in 1928. Fueling controversy was the fact that U.S. Marines had reentered Nicaragua in 1926 to protect American lives and property after a revolution broke out.²⁸ Latin American nations went to the meeting intent on extracting a U.S. commitment to nonintervention. Knowing that nearly every U.S. legation in the region had reported hostile public reaction to the intervention, Secretary of State Frank Kellogg prepped his U.S. delegation, writing: ‘the past year has seen the development of a vigorous anti-American propaganda throughout Latin America based on charges of “imperialism” and characterized by violent criticism of the relations existing between the United States and Mexico and the American policy in Nicaragua’.” In the end, a proposed ban on intervention stating that “no state may intervene in the internal affairs of another” was eventually withdrawn. Latin America’s efforts to extract a commitment to nonintervention from the United States would have to wait for Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1930s Good Neighbor policy.²⁹

1928–1948: Good Neighbors & Nonintervention (Seventh Conference)

As US invasions of Latin American countries threatened the viability of the Pan American Union, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration shifted U.S. foreign policy from direct intervention to one primarily focused on using economic and political influence. Beginning in the early 1920s, successive chiefs of the State Department’s Latin American Division felt the United States no longer needed to intervene in Central American affairs and Congress opposed a US presence in Nicaragua. These views contributed to Roosevelt’s

²⁶ Thomas M. Leonard, “The New Pan Americanism in U.S.-Central American Relations, 1933–1954,” in David Sheinin, ed., *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000), 96.

²⁷ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 266; Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 195. This is the only International Conference held in Washington between the dedication of the Pan American Union Building in 1910 and transformation of the Union of American Republics to the Organization of American States (the next conference in Washington, DC. took place in 1964). Special conferences (called technical conferences until 1928) were established by the Second International Conference of American States in 1902 to focus on narrowly defined subjects and issues. These conferences supplemented regular meetings. Atkins, *Encyclopedia*, 432. In addition, an expansion on other levels at the conference established the Inter-American Commission of Women 1928.

²⁸ In this situation, the United States set up two neutral zones in separate geographical areas, one to protect American lives and the second as a place to host internal Nicaraguan negotiations.

²⁹ Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 286–89. Included in the US delegation were former Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, Ambassador Dwight Morrow, and Stanford University President Ray Lyman Wilbur, along with President Calvin Coolidge.

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Good Neighbor policy and to the association of Pan Americanism with nonintervention.³⁰ His March 4, 1933, inaugural address committed the nation to improved relations with Latin America.

Replacement of the Monroe Doctrine with the Good Neighbor policy positively influenced the Seventh International Conference of American States (December 1933) in Montevideo, Uruguay. At the conference the secretary of state proclaimed that “no government need fear any intervention on the part of United States under the Roosevelt administration.”³¹ The conference adopted the Convention on the Rights and Duties of States which “declared as inadmissible any intervention ‘directly or indirectly, and for whatever reason, in the internal or external affairs of the parties’.” Most Latin American members considered the principle to be the “cornerstone” of the inter-American system.³² The United States had committed itself to the principle of absolute nonintervention. Under the policy, the United States preemptively withdrew its troops from Haiti, nullified the 1901 Platt Amendment that had justified US intervention in Cuba, and renegotiated the Panama Treaty for the Panama Canal.³³ The new principle meant that the organization aimed to stabilize the Western Hemisphere through multilateral inter-American cooperation with an emphasis on trade and cooperation, rather than on military force.

The long periods that elapsed between international conferences often meant the organization could not keep pace with developments in international and inter-American relations, particularly the goal of maintaining peace and security. A consultation process to address this limitation arose in 1938 at the Eighth International Conference of American States in Lima, in which the member states found “that every act susceptible of disturbing the peace of America affects each and every country and justifies the initiation of consultation procedures.” Henceforth, consultations on emergency security matters were to be implemented through a newly created Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.³⁴ Consequently, numerous issues addressed by the conference were taken up by special inter-American conferences and specialized bodies and, beginning in 1939, the Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. One such emergency consultation convened in Rio de Janeiro (1942) after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. As a result, the American republics recommended breaking diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy, and Japan.³⁵

A more world-wide response to the attack on Pearl Harbor called into question the future of the inter-American system. On January 1, 1942, the major nations of the world declared their support for the formation of a “United Nations” global alliance to work toward peace and victory over the common enemy. The United States was inclined to abandon the inter-American system since it saw the new international organization as a duplicate system and its focus had grown from the Western Hemisphere to a global one. On the other hand, Latin America had grave reservations with abandoning the system. It had finally convinced the United States to pursue a noninterventionist policy and had concerns that the United Nations might intervene in its affairs. The Latin American viewpoint held sway at the 1945 Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, in

³⁰ Leonard, “The New Pan Americanism,” 96–97.

³¹ Ibid., 95.

³² John C. Dreier, “The Organization of American States and United States Policy,” *International Organization* 17 (Winter 1963), www.jstor.org/stable/2705462, 40; Atkins, *Encyclopedia*, 360, 361. Dreier was a US representative on the OAS Council from 1951 to 1960.

³³ The Platt Amendment established the terms under which the United States would end its military occupation of Cuba that had begun in 1898 during the Spanish American War and place the government and control of Cuba in its people.

³⁴ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, quote on 322, 277. This topic had originated in the 1936 Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in Buenos Aires.

³⁵ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 24; Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 2. The first two Ministers of Foreign Affairs consultation had taken place in Panama City in 1939 and Havana in 1940.

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Chapultepec, Mexico, in which the members of the inter-American system decided to strengthen the system rather than abandon it.

A follow-up to the 1945 Mexico conference addressed how to strengthen inter-American peace and security within the challenges of postwar global conflict. The 1947 Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security in Rio de Janeiro produced the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, known as the Rio Treaty. This primary source of inter-American mutual security principles and procedures set up a defensive military alliance between the United States and Latin American nations to reinforce regional peace and security and strengthen the principle of nonintervention. It would become highly important to future matters of conflict resolution.³⁶

In the following year, the Ninth International Conference in Bogota (1948), also known as the Conference on Reorganization of the inter-American system, ended a nearly sixty year-era of inter-American relations that had begun in 1890 with the creation of the Union of American Republics. The conference replaced the Union of American Republics with the Organization of American States (OAS). Under Article 78 of the OAS charter, the Pan American Union “was to exercise all those powers that the charter and other inter-American treaties and agreements entrusted to it.” Overall, the new post-World War II system would emerge stronger and reinvigorated with an improved Latin American position.³⁷

The Workings of the Pan American Union

During the period of its initial completion in 1910 to the creation of the OAS in 1948, the Pan American Union Building supported the inter-American system’s pursuit of peace and security within the Americas, nonintervention, conflict resolution, and the organization’s charge to collect and disseminate commercial information. The building housed the Pan American Union with its Columbus Memorial Library, Governing Board, and executive offices. As the central bureau for the Western Hemisphere, a staff of statisticians, translators, editors, trade experts, compilers, clerks, and stenographers worked to meet the Pan American Union’s mission. In addition, diplomatic functions and meetings with staff and dignitaries took place in grand reception halls and meeting rooms appointed for formal events as well as for smaller meetings.

The first floor of the Pan American Union Building served two functions. One was to disseminate information from its vast library. According to the annual report for fiscal year 1913 to 1914, the Columbus Memorial Library held 30,000 volumes and 16,000 photographs, and handled nearly one million pieces of mail annually. It dealt with correspondence, distributed requested printed matter, published handbooks of each republic and the *Bulletin* (120,000 for the year), which was created to educate and inform the countries and people about one another. It prepared reports on individual subjects relating to its constituent countries, and distributed weekly news memoranda describing progress in the countries. Material went out in four languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. The report also revealed that library experts had recently classed the library “as the largest, most comprehensive and most practical collection of official, semi-official, statistical, and up-to-date descriptive Americana in the world.”³⁸ In 1922, the library became a depository of all official publications for its many member governments. In the following year, the library became the official archives for inter-American conventions and treaties. By 1930, the library collection included close to twenty-two hundred maps

³⁶ Dreier, “Organization of American States,” 43; “Protocol of Amendment to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty),” [www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29\(1\).html](http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29(1).html). The Rio Treaty became the model for the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

³⁷ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 26, 67.

³⁸ “The Pan American Union Annual Report, 1913–1914,” n.p. All annual reports are located in the Columbus Memorial Library, Washington, DC.

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and served as a major source for newspaper and periodical subscriptions, along with official government gazettes.³⁹

Per the Annual Report for fiscal year 1913 to 1914, counselors dealt with correspondence from those needing “trustworthy information” regarding different aspects of Pan American commercial, financial, and general development. Statisticians compiled and published an annual review of the trade of Latin America. Staff responded to requests for information and data from North and South American boards of trade, business firms, and individuals.⁴⁰

Chief among the Pan American Union’s tasks was to record, distribute, and implement the conclusions or resolutions of inter-American conferences held in Washington and various Latin American countries. The Fifth International Conference of American States in 1923 in Santiago, Chile, entrusted logistics to the Union’s Governing Board for a series of special conferences needing technical expertise. For the Fourth Pan American Commercial Conference held in Washington in October 1931, the Union sent a series of memoranda on each topic to all the delegates prior to the conference and then implemented the adopted resolutions. In another instance, the Union was tasked with obtaining information from all the Republics so that an International Conference could formulate plans for the “development of closer political, commercial and intellectual relations between the republics.”⁴¹

Beyond administrative tasks, dignitaries met with staff throughout the building. Arriving in the vestibule and congregating in the patio, visitors could then disperse to the library, offices, and meeting places for meetings and conferences of varying size and importance. The 1919 to 1920 annual report emphasized a “constant stream of callers,” many from Latin American countries, to confer with “the Director General, Assistant Director, Chief Clerk and Trade Adviser, Counselor, Chief Statistician, editors of the ‘Bulletin’, Librarian and other members of the staff” on varying Pan American affairs.⁴²

The second floor with its vast Hall of the Americas, board room, committee room, and a diplomatic waiting room was devoted to high level meetings, some of milestone inter-American importance. One example of “continental interest” took place on February 7, 1923, when representatives of five Central American republics concluded a conference the Director General described as a distinct step forward in the history of international cooperation. Another example cited in the 1931–1932 annual report occurred on November 11, 1931, when the Hall of the Americas hosted another of the long series of gatherings considered milestones in the history of Inter-American Conciliation and Arbitration, namely the inaugural meeting of the delegations of Bolivia and Paraguay to discuss a non-aggression pact.⁴³

Conclusion

Between 1910 and 1948, the Union of the American Republics guided the inter-American system through Western Hemispheric turmoil. During the process the United States abandoned the Roosevelt Corollary,

³⁹ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 87. The library also provided programs and services.

⁴⁰ “The Pan American Union Annual Report, 1913–1914,” n.p.

⁴¹ “Annual Report of the Director General of the Pan American Union for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1932,” 2–3.

⁴² “The Pan American Union, Annual Report,” July 1, 1919 to June 30, 1920, 6. The Union also participated in educational efforts. It started a study of Spanish and Portuguese languages, and the history and geography of Latin America in a number of universities, colleges, and public and private schools across the United States. Latin American students coming to the United States could also get assistance from the Pan American Union with their studies. “The Pan American Union Annual Report, 1913–1914,” n.p.

⁴³ “Annual Report of the Director General of the Pan American Union for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1932,” 4.

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accepted the principle of nonintervention, and pursued a Good Neighbor policy. A mutual security system evolved to respond to emergencies. Latin America gained a leadership role within the organization and the system survived the creation of the United Nations. Overall, the system was extended beyond the commercial and economic matters that had dominated US interests at the first international meeting in Washington to one equipped for broadened endeavors.

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CRITERION 1: THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM & THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, 1948–1967

*[The Organization of American States]...is par excellence the principal hemispheric forum where South, Central, and North American and Caribbean nation-states come together to dialogue, negotiate and cooperate....*⁴⁴
Ruben M. Perina

The OAS came into the new era under altered relations with the United States. The country emerged from the war as a world power, the days of the Good Neighbor policy ended, and the Cold War began. Overall, Latin America ceased to be the focus of US foreign policy and, unless its interests were threatened, took a more global than regional approach. Thus the United States primarily viewed the role of the inter-American system as part of an international security system to shield the hemisphere from Communist infiltration, while Latin America continued to view the role of the system as protection from external incursions and to meet their economic development needs. The Pan American Union Building stands as a monument to an important chapter in the inter-American system during a vital period in American international history. As the principal hemispheric forum of the Western Hemisphere, the building played an extraordinary role in resolving conflicts arising from US foreign policy in the Cold War and addressing Latin American social and economic reform.

In the postwar era, the charter of the OAS codified the principles and institutions of the inter-American system that had guided the Pan American movement for decades. Under Article 1 of the charter, the OAS had responsibility “to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote [the states’] solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and their independence.”⁴⁵ Growth of the organization advanced rapidly due to urgent security, economic, and social questions. The modernization is reflected by the expansion of the Pan American Union into a new administration building one block west of the Pan American Union Building and the increase in high level meetings in the original building.

Structure

The reorganization, consolidation, and strengthening of the inter-American system under the OAS charter modernized the organization’s structure. Under its 1948 charter, three bodies made all the organization’s decisions: the Inter-American Conference, the Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the Council of the OAS. The postwar period’s fast pace of events demanded the organization be able to address issues more swiftly than was possible with the typical five year periods between the international conferences. This meant a lessening role for the international conferences and more responsibility for the Council of the OAS that met on a weekly basis and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs that could be convened on an as-needed basis.⁴⁶ Both of these entities met regularly in the Pan American Union Building.

⁴⁴ Ruben M. Perina, *The Organization of American States as the Advocate and Guardian of Democracy* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2015), 1.

⁴⁵ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 306. A myriad of specialized conferences, agencies, and commissions are associated with the Pan American Union. Two examples include the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (1959) which convened some sessions in Washington, and the Inter-American Peace Committee (1940) in which the Pan American Union provided technical support and working facilities. Such committees can be found by name in Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*.

⁴⁶ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 37. In addition, Stoetzer identifies technical institutions “of a special status” which have a permanent seat in Washington, DC. These include the Special Consultative Committee on Security, the Inter-American Statistical Institute, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Defense Board, the Inter-American Nuclear Energy Commission, and the Inter-American Peace Committee. Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 37.

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Inter-American Conference

This body, as in the prewar years, remained the highest authority of the OAS. It determined organizational policy and the structure and authority of its bodies and was authorized to address any matter concerning the American republics. It met every five years in various countries. After its meeting in 1948 when it created the charter of the OAS, it met on its regular schedule only once with its tenth conference in Venezuela in 1954. Thereafter, it convened three special conferences for extraordinary circumstances in 1964 (Washington), 1965 (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), and 1967 (Buenos Aires, Argentina). The 1964 meeting convened in Washington to consider procedures for admitting new members. The background of this meeting was the anticipation of new mini-states, like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, that would become independent and apply for membership in the OAS.⁴⁷

Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Under either the Rio Treaty or the Charter of the OAS, any member state could request a Meeting of Consultation “to consider problems of an urgent nature and of common interest to the American States” (Article 60). Meetings sometimes remained opened for extended periods. In Washington, four formal meetings regarding security and economic issues took place between 1951 and 1970 at the Pan American Union Building:⁴⁸

- March 26–April 7, 1951 (during the Korean War) to consider problems of Communism and hemispheric security.
- July 21–26, 1964 regarding Venezuela’s request for sanctions against Cuba.
- May 1–June 2, 1965 (first period of sessions); August 9, 1965–November 2, 1965–1970 (second period of sessions) to deliberate on the United States invasion of the Dominican Republic.
- January 24–February 1, 1967 regarding America’s Alliance for Progress program and Latin American economic integration.

The Council of the OAS

Under the 1948 charter, the Governing Board of the Pan American Union became the Council of the OAS, the organization’s political arm comprised of the ambassadors of the OAS member states. This body supervised the functioning of the Pan American Union and evolved to occupy the central position in the OAS structure. Beginning in the 1950s, the Council met at least weekly and, until the late 1950s, held its meetings in the second floor Council Room of the Pan American Union Building. It then moved its meetings to the first floor to accommodate “larger delegations, permanent observer country representatives, and the media.”⁴⁹ To assist in

⁴⁷ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 359–60. Jamaica had become independent as well as Tobago and Trinidad in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Of concern was whether a newly admitted English-speaking member would side with Latin America or the United States. Meeting participants decided to require a two-thirds majority for admittance to the organization. Ibid., 42–43.

⁴⁸ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 323; Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 362–64. Atkins notes how the foreign ministers conducted informal meetings beginning in 1958 and lasting until 1967. The first two were held in Washington, DC in 1958 and 1962. Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 324.

⁴⁹ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 59, quoted phrase 60. Even though Stoetzer refers to “a larger delegation,” the number of representative of the American republics on the Council remained at twenty-one until 1967. Stoetzer refers to a special

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its work, the Council established three technical subdivisions: the Inter-American Economic and Social Council headquartered in Washington within the Pan American Union, the Inter-American Council of Jurists in Rio de Janeiro, and the Inter-American Cultural Council in Mexico City. These committees were tasked with answering requests and furnishing expert opinions upon demand by the OAS Council and various governments.⁵⁰

The Council was highly influential between 1948 and 1967. It served as the executive committee of the inter-American system, set the rules for the three technical bodies, and remained in perpetual contact with inter-American affairs and other inter-American organizations. The Council chairman also had the power to call a meeting of consultation when hemispheric security or peace was threatened whereby the Council could constitute itself as the Provisional Organ of Consultation to settle matters on its own or to consult until the Ministers of Foreign Affairs could convene.⁵¹ To resolve conflicts the Provisional Organ almost always appointed and dispatched a committee to the country invoking consultation which then reported its findings back to the Provisional Organ.

A Cold War Framework

In 1948, a revitalized OAS embarked on its new path, carrying with it some sixty years of practical experience. Its work was enhanced by the fact that Latin America had gained a more prominent role in the organization. For the first time, a Latin American served in the top post of the Pan American Union. In 1948, Alberto Lleras Camargo succeeded eight directors, all US nationals, when he was elected as secretary general. The position of assistant secretary general went to William Manger, a position reserved to the United States until 1968. This action furthermore allayed some perception that the Pan American Union was primarily a US institution.⁵²

Under the Cold War framework, the US government interpreted the Rio Treaty as confirmation of its “inherent right of self-defense” against the “external threat” of communism. As such, in practice the treaty augmented the Monroe Doctrine as added legal cover for US intervention when international communism threatened the sovereignty of any Latin American nation. “For the United States,” writes scholar David Loveman, “the Rio Pact and the OAS Charter were regional props in the international regime it sought to erect as part of its post-World War II grand strategy.”⁵³

Under the OAS charter, “Latin American nationalists sought respect for self-determination, equality of states, and sovereignty.”⁵⁴ A lackluster postwar economic recovery hampered these objectives. Aspirations plummeted in March 1948, after Congress passed the Economic Cooperation Act, commonly known as the Marshall Plan, to stimulate Europe’s reconstruction and economic recovery. No such economic assistance plan came forth from the United States for Latin America. At the 1947 Rio meeting, after the Marshall Plan had been announced, Truman told the delegates: “the problems of countries in this hemisphere are different in nature and

council room being built on the ground floor that was repeatedly enlarged. Ibid., 59, 60. It appears the Council moved to the library reading room as the library had moved to the basement in April 1951. Stella Villagran (Reference Librarian, Columbus Memorial Library) e-mail message to author, July 11, 2016.

⁵⁰ Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 61.

⁵¹ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 108–09.

⁵² Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 71–72, 79. A ten-year term was also adopted. Camargo resigned in 1954 at the Tenth Conference in Caracas, disappointed that he could not interject his opinions on various problems per the Council. Stoetzer also notes that the amount of influence those outside Washington, DC, thought the United States had on the Pan American Union was actually less, and that the agency’s Latin American character increased each year. Ibid., 77–78

⁵³ Loveman, *No Higher Law*, 271–72.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 272.

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cannot be relieved by the same means and the same approaches which are in contemplation for Europe’.”⁵⁵ The money for Latin American recovery would need to come from private sources. Region-wide resentment followed over America’s lack of appreciation for the support Latin America and the inter-American system had provided its neighbor during World War II. And so, the United States gradually turned its back on Latin America until its interests were at stake in Guatemala in 1954.

1954–1963, Guatemala to the Alliance for Progress (tenth conference, last of the original conferences)

Beginning in the mid-1950s, the OAS entered into a mounting state of crisis. The increasing economic and social problems plaguing Latin America combined with a perceived communist threat in Guatemala came to a head at the Tenth International Conference held during March 1954 in Caracas, Venezuela. President Eisenhower viewed the Tenth Conference as an opportunity to marshal and crystallize Latin American public opinion on the communist issue. In a “tenacious U.S. display of so-called Pan American unity” Latin Americans were asked to take a strong anticommunist stand while still receiving no economic and social aid. The request, as Carlos Støetzer surmised: “was to become a landmark in the erosion of U.S.-Latin American relations and, hence, of the Pan American movement.” Secretary of State John Foster Dulles argued that Communism should be treated as a threat to the peace while some saw the need for social reform in Guatemala. A resolution introduced by Dulles, commonly known as the Caracas Declaration, stated that “control of the political institutions of any American State by the international communist movement...would constitute a threat to the sovereignty and political independence of the American States, endangering the peace of America.” The declaration further called for a Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider the situation.⁵⁶

With the passage of the Caracas Declaration in 1954, the Monroe Doctrine moved into a new phase of its history. The Eisenhower administration used the Central Intelligence Agency to overthrow a constitutionally elected, reform-minded government in Guatemala.” Initially, the United States threatened reprisals over a proposed Guatemalan land reform program to take over unused land owned by the United Fruit Company prompted Guatemalan officials to import a “boatload of Soviet-bloc arms.” The United States saw this as a Soviet intrusion and a direct challenge to the Monroe Doctrine. Hereafter, the doctrine would expand beyond an external threat to internal subversion.⁵⁷

American covert operations intended to contain or ‘rollback’ communism had come to Central America. The ouster of Jacobo Árbenz in Guatemala spawned an enduring legacy of anti-Americanism in Latin America. Into the early 1960s, the United States participated quietly in covert anticommunist operations in the Caribbean, Central America, and parts of South America. It also gave robust American support to military dictators in Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Colombia, and Venezuela.⁵⁸

Advances in Economic Development

During this time, a nadir in US-Latin American relations manifested itself in the hostile demonstration Vice President Richard Nixon faced on his “goodwill trip” to Peru and Venezuela in 1958. Thereafter, the

⁵⁵ Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, 333. The plan got its name from Secretary of State George C. Marshall who called for a comprehensive program to rebuild Europe at Harvard University’s June 5, 1947, commencement.

⁵⁶ Støetzer, *Organization of American States*, 40–41; Loveman, *No Higher Law*, 281. The full name of the resolution is “Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States against International Communist Intervention.”

⁵⁷ LaFeber, “The Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine,” 137–38.

⁵⁸ Loveman, *No Higher Law*, 282.

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Eisenhower administration indicated a willingness to make changes in US-Latin American policies to benefit Latin America economic development and social reform. That September, Brazilian president Juscelino Kubitschek proposed “Operation Pan America” before an informal meeting of American foreign ministers in Washington. The operation placed an urgent emphasis on raising Latin American living standards. The foreign ministers recommended the establishment of an inter-American financial institution to assist in economic development. This led to the development of the Inter-American Development Bank, the world’s first regional multilateral bank. Established in 1959, the bank served to “promote and accelerate the social and economic development of the Latin American and Caribbean constituents.” Headquartered in Washington, DC, the bank is an entity within the inter-American system.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, on January 1, 1959, Fidel Castro came into power in Cuba. His affiliation with the Soviet Union prompted the United States to pay attention to how an improved Latin American economy could divert communism. In July 1960 the United States announced the \$500 million Eisenhower plan for Latin American economic development, aimed at halting “the further spread of communism in the Western Hemisphere.” The Council of the OAS then constituted itself as a special committee to study new measures for economic cooperation and in September 1960, proposed a multilateral program of economic development and social reform. It turned to the Inter-American Development Bank and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council to administer the program.⁶⁰

To continue to improve relations with Latin America, President John F. Kennedy, in his inaugural address on January 20, 1961, announced a new policy aimed at transforming the United States’ “good words into good deeds, in a new alliance for progress, to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty.”⁶¹ The Alliance for Progress program, meant to stimulate Latin American political, social, and economic development, became a major undertaking in the inter-American system as part of a \$20 billion cooperative program. The United States contributed the \$500 million authorized in the Eisenhower Plan to the program and the OAS helped in the promotion of the program through the Pan American Union’s Assistant Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs.⁶²

Continuing Intervention

In 1962, the inter-American system found the increasing ties between Cuba and the Soviet bloc to be incompatible with its principles. The crisis had become the most important issue in US-Latin American relations. With peace and security threatened, the Eighth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs considered the situation at a meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in January 1962. Eight resolutions ensued including one that excluded Cuba from the OAS. The Cuban Missile Crisis followed and at the request of the United States, the Council of the OAS met (in Washington) on October 22, 1962, to discuss information about weapons with nuclear capability that the Soviet Union had placed on Cuban territory. As Provisional Organ, the Council accepted US evidence of nuclear weapons in Cuba and called on Cuba to dismantle and remove all such weapons. In addition, the Provisional Organ also gave the United States full backing, although

⁵⁹ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 17, 247–48. The creation of an inter-American banking institution had been debated at multiple inter-American conferences since the First International Conference in 1889–1890 and did not come to fruition due to US concern of multiple factors. See Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 128–30.

⁶⁰ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 17. The name of the committee was the Special Committee to Study the Formulation of New Measures for Economic Cooperation.

⁶¹ Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 17.

⁶² Stoetzer, *Organization of American States*, 82–83.

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stopping short of collective action, when it stipulated that all member states could take any steps needed to cooperate with the United States.⁶³

The United States invasion of the Dominican Republic in April 1965 created yet another setback in inter-American relations. President Johnson had sent US Marines into an internal revolutionary movement, under the pretext of protecting American lives, but in reality to avert the potential for another Cuban-type revolutionary government. The Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Washington, DC, (May 1–June 2, 1965; August 9, 1965–November 2, 1965–1970) found that the United States had violated the OAS Charter. To put an end to unilateral activity, and in a move supported by the United States, the OAS established an inter-American force to replace the US invasion force. An OAS committee then assisted in creating a climate conducive to resolution and the Dominicans restored normalcy in June of 1966.⁶⁴

A New Era, 1967

A new era emerged with the Third Special Inter-American Conference that took place in Buenos Aires on February 15, 1967. Member states realized that the OAS's 1948 charter could not confront issues associated with the ever-changing world and that new approaches were needed to address recurring problems such as intervention and improving Latin American economic and social conditions. The resulting "Protocol of Buenos Aires of 1967" resulted in a new OAS structure. The Conference of American States, the highest authority of the OAS, was replaced with the annual General Assembly. The Council of the OAS became the Permanent Council. However the latter no longer held the central position the Council had acquired after 1948. Instead, the former Council's functions were divided between the new Permanent Council and the new General Assembly, and the three subordinate councils were made autonomous.⁶⁵ The OAS General Secretariat, formerly the Pan American Union, was officially established in 1970. The result was a reformulated OAS with new internal structures, new relationships, and more complicated politics.⁶⁶

Conclusion & Epilogue

Following World War II, Pan Americanism faltered. One of its chief tenets lost force as the United States addressed economic development needs in Europe but not in Latin America. The movement enjoyed a revival with the Alliance for Progress initiated in the 1960s but then waned after the Dominican intervention. The United States lost its sense of urgency in the region as Cuba failed to spread its revolution and then became more involved with Vietnam. In 1972, the Alliance for Progress ended. Throughout, the organization's headquarters in Washington remained the administrative, symbolic, and ceremonial heart of the inter-American system.

A highlight in 1977 came when President Jimmy Carter signed and President Omar Torrijos ratified the Panama treaties in a ceremony held in the Hall of the Americas at the headquarters of the OAS, by then referred to as the Organization of American States building. The treaties gradually ended the United States' control of the

⁶³ Ibid., 51. This is also an example of crisis in which the Provisional Organ of Consultation advised the United Nations that it would maintain its role of consultation. The organ's recommendation for the member states was based on Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty.

⁶⁴ Stotzter, *Organization of American States*, 52–55.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 109. In 1988, the Columbus Memorial Library moved to the organization's nearby Administrative Services Building. Its holdings had exceeded the space available in the Pan American Union Building. Ibid., 87.

⁶⁶ In addition, the inter-American system began to splinter with new specialized intergovernmental organizations created to deal with sub-regional issues and topics. Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 15–16.

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Panama Canal. Otherwise, the inter-American system declined in activity until the system experienced a revival at the end of the Cold War and sparked new interest and activity.⁶⁷

Today, the OAS is the oldest regional intergovernmental organization in the world. It continues to play an important role in international relations in the Western Hemisphere, but its role and the structure within which it operates, has changed. It has evolved into a more truly multilateral organization that works closely with other regional and international organizations to promote democracy, integrate development, human rights, and multidimensional security.

CRITERION 1: Comparison of Properties

Few properties are comparable in their historical associations to the Pan American Union Headquarters. The properties considered in this section either have a direct relationship to the inter-American system or are intergovernmental organizations with missions focused on resolving international disputes.

The **Commercial Bureau of American Republics** (later the Pan American Union; designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966 as part of Blair House) began in 1890 in a townhouse at 2 Jackson Place (today 700 Jackson Place NW), where it resided for twenty years before moving to the Pan American Union Building in 1910. It is primarily noted as the beginning of the library and the collection and distribution of commercial information, and is not associated with events of exceptional national significance that began following the organization's move to the Pan American Union Building.

In 1949, the Pan American Union expanded to the **Administration Building** at 19th Street and Constitution Avenue NW. While directly associated with the work of the organization, it lacks the exceptional significance of the Pan American Union Headquarters where the three highest bodies of the organization—the Council of the OAS, the Conference of Foreign of Ministers, and the International Conference of American States—met to resolve regional conflicts.

Two major organizations beyond the OAS have been created to mediate and resolve international or multi-national regional disputes. The first, the **League of Nations** (1920–1946) was created after World War I as an intergovernmental organization to provide a forum for resolving international disputes. Although proposed by President Woodrow Wilson, the United States never became a member. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has no associated property in the United States.

The second, the **United Nations**, was established after World War II when countries once again felt the need for an intergovernmental organization to mediate disputes and prevent future wars. Created on October 24, 1945, the United States supported and became a founding member of the United Nations. Under the United Nation's charter, regional organizations were sanctioned within its framework. Likewise, the OAS Charter and the Rio Treaty reiterate the United Nations charter provisions and refer to the OAS as a regional agency within the United Nations. Although regional organizations were chartered under the United Nations, it seems that their actions could ultimately be subject to United Nations direction. In reality, as G. Pope Atkins concludes in his *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, the inter-American system held substantial autonomy particularly with regard to peace and security. Overall, some regional issues went directly to the United Nations, and some decisions by the OAS were appealed there. However, the inter-American system served mostly as the primary forum, with limited action by the United Nations. The United Nations Headquarters in New York City has

⁶⁷ Ibid., ix.

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similar historic associations as the Pan American Union but with a worldwide rather than a hemispheric focus, thus its context is different.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ibid., 9.

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CRITERION 4 – A PAN AMERICAN DESIGN: BEAUX-ARTS TRADITION & SYMBOLISM

The building occupied by the Pan American Union in Washington is a monument to Pan Americanism. Its architecture, its interior decoration, its sculpture, its fountains, and landscape all breathe the atmosphere of Latin American culture.⁶⁹

Joseph Reed in the Washington Post

April 7, 1940

The Pan American Union Building is a powerful expression of the Beaux-Arts principles of architecture and is the benchmark building that launched the nationally recognized career of architect Paul Cret. It exemplifies the character of the Pan American movement within the Beaux-Arts school of design. The architecture translates a Pan American program into “a vision of enlightened civic relations.”⁷⁰ Abundant allegories in the form of North and South American themes and motifs express the organization’s goals of promoting trade, unity and political cooperation between the Americas. Beneath the richly ornate buildings, Cret’s aim to convey an intimate monumentality lay in its meticulous composition of masses and spaces. A central inverted U-shaped plan welcomes and channels visitors throughout the building while a carefully studied system of axes and vistas tie together the building’s functions within an intimate and inviting setting. In its conception and design, the Pan American Union Building, together with its Mediterranean-style, 1912 annex and Blue Aztec garden setting perfectly conveys the institution’s complex compositional and functional relations.

A Design Competition in the Age of the American Renaissance

In April 1907, the International Bureau of American Republics published an architectural design competition program for its new building in the bureau’s own publication, the *Monthly Bulletin*, along with the *American Architect* magazine and other architectural publications.⁷¹ The directive called for the building to have administrative offices, meeting rooms, an assembly hall for cultural exchange and diplomacy, and room to house the Columbus Library for information exchange. Competition rules referred to the building as the organization’s “home” and suggested including a patio: “If the Spanish or Latin feature of a patio is included, it should have a sliding or rolling glass roof, in part, for protection against inclement weather or cold, but capable of being opened in summer, which the ground surface of the patio should permit of the place of trees, flowers, and fountains.”⁷²

Architects were free to develop plans as they thought best. However, the bureau placed an emphasis on harmonizing the design with the bureau’s function. This was, after all, the home of twenty-one republics of the Americas under an organizational umbrella formed to promote commerce and trade, and to develop closer ties of peace, friendship, and association. “The people of the major portion of the Republics,” stated the *Program and Conditions*, “are of Spanish, Portugese [*sic*], or other Latin extraction, and it therefore may be desirable that the building should have a character and tone in harmony therewith.” Divisions of space were clearly outlined. In particular, the assembly hall needed to “be adapted to International Conferences or Congresses, and to other dignified gatherings, such as receptions to distinguished visitors, addresses of men eminent in various callings at home and abroad, and should permit decoration, ornamentation, and finish in harmony with the purpose of the International Union of American Republics.”⁷³

⁶⁹ *Washington Post*, April 7, 1940.

⁷⁰ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 26.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁷² González, *Designing Pan-America*, 71, 72.

⁷³ Lacey, *American Competitions*, xxii, xxiv.

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The competition coincided with the height of the American Renaissance and the Beaux-Arts movements in America. Classical symbolism for civic buildings had gained momentum during the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, also known as the Chicago's World Fair, which was conceived to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' epic voyage. The exposition featured commanding Roman style classical buildings set within an immense landscape of open green spaces, parks, water features, grand avenues, and vistas. A number of American cities inspired by the fair, including Washington, DC, proposed redevelopment plans as part of a larger phenomenon known as the "City Beautiful" movement of the 1890s and 1900s that promoted beautification and monumental grandeur.

For the Washington plan, Congress named a distinguished commission that included Daniel Burnham, principal architect for Chicago's World Fair, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and architect Charles F. McKim of McKim, Mead & White. The resulting 1902 McMillan Plan, named after Senator James McMillan, envisioned the Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol Building as a grand open space flanked by classical civic architecture.⁷⁴ As scholar Richard Guy Wilson has observed, the McMillan Plan "predicted the future of governmental architecture:"

The American Renaissance, by both definition and action, was intensely nationalistic. It appropriated images and symbols of past civilizations and used them to create a magnificent American pageant.... The civilization envisaged for America was a public life,...of large monuments, memorials, and public buildings in the eternal style adorned with murals and sculptures personifying heroes and symbolizing virtue and enterprise.⁷⁵

The Beaux-Arts principles encapsulated in the Chicago World's Fair and the McMillan Plan originated at the École des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts) in France. Beaux-Arts designs typically integrated classical architecture with sculpture and other decorative elements created by artists who worked collaboratively to design buildings and spaces, often in an allegorical manner. Through the building's contents, visitors were immediately made aware of its function. This concept, known as *architecture parlante*—"speaking architecture"—has its roots in French architectural theory.⁷⁶ Paul Cret, recognized as the exemplar of this architecture, and established Philadelphia architect Albert Kelsey, formed a professional partnership to enter the Pan American Union Headquarters competition.⁷⁷

Kelsey & Cret

Albert Kelsey (1870–1950) graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1895 and thereafter joined two other architects in the firm of Kennedy, Hays & Kelsey, where he worked until 1905 when Robert G. Kennedy retired to Scotland. Following Kennedy's retirement, Kelsey worked with Cret on the Pan American Union design competition. Kelsey was recognized for his organizational activities in both the T-Square Club, founded

⁷⁴ For a more complete discussion of the McMillan Plan and the Senate Park Commission that wrote it see Sue Kohler and Pamela Scott, eds., *Designing the Nation's Capital: The 1901 Plan for Washington, D.C.* (Washington, DC: Commission of Fine Arts, 2006).

⁷⁵ Richard Guy Wilson, "The American Renaissance, 1876–1917," <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma02/rodriguez/hs-american%20renaissance%20final%20page.html>, n.p. Wilson quotes Senator McMillan as stating that "It is the general opinion that for monumental work, Greece and Rome furnish the styles of architecture best adapted to serve the manifold wants of today, not only as to beauty and dignity, but as to utility." Ibid.

⁷⁶ The idea that "artists and craftsmen would work together to create a great unified building" is a key element imported to America from France. Andrew S. Dolkart, "The Architecture and Development of New York City: the Public Realm," Columbia University, http://ci.columbia.edu/0240s/0244_3/0244_3_fulltext.pdf.

⁷⁷ David P. Handlin, *American Architecture* (1985; repr., London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 171.

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by Philadelphia architects in 1883 as a meeting place for informal design competitions and professional fellowship, and the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He served as president of both the Architectural League of America and the Pennsylvania State Association of Architects, and he served on the architects committee that planned and constructed the “Model City” exhibit of the New York Municipal Arts Society at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition held in St. Louis.⁷⁸

Paul Phillipe Cret (1876–1945), born in Lyon, France, gained his first experience in architecture in 1890 while working in the office of his uncle, an architect in Lyon. He entered the École des Beaux Arts in Lyon in 1893, and in 1896 won the institution’s Paris Prize to enter the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris on a scholarship. In 1901, he won the École’s Rougevin Prize and the Grand Medal of Emulation in recognition of his outstanding skill as a draftsman. He attended the École until 1903, when he moved to America to accept a teaching position at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He was selected at the recommendation of his former students at the École who described him as “a supremely competent teacher, a man gifted in design.”⁷⁹ Cret also established a practice in Philadelphia that specialized in designing civic buildings and gained commissions through architectural competitions, the first being the Pan American Union Building.

In America, Cret encountered an architectural debate regarding the early twentieth century design philosophy of civic buildings. The essential question was: should a building’s plan or its design take precedence? Because a building’s use can change over time, some architects argued for a beautiful elevation that remains pertinent forever. Alternatively, architects argued that it was better to sacrifice the design for a successful plan. Cret rejected both these views. Per his École training, he argued that no conflict should exist between the beauty and the utility of a building and that public institutions required buildings with a monumentality equal to their civic value and they must have the ability to convey their purpose.⁸⁰

Cret also possessed a strong view on the relationship between public buildings and citizens. Rather than being places of wonder and reverence, he felt they should urge citizens to “participate pleasurably in the work of governance.” Thus the design and plan for a building should inform the public of “both the character and accessibility of the institution and its value for contemporary society.”⁸¹ His conception of civic architecture and his ideal of institutions would serve him well in the Pan American Union competition.

The Winning Entry: “At Home”

Out of the 130 entries the bureau received, the Committee of Award considered seventy-eight. Five people comprised the committee: Secretary of State Elihu Root (chairman *ex officio* of the organization’s Governing Board), the bureau’s director, John Barrett, and three members elected to the committee by the competing architects: Charles F. McKim, Henry Hornbostel, and Austin W. Lord. McKim of the architectural firm McKim, Meade & White, had studied at the École des Beaux Art in Paris and had served on the commission for the McMillan Plan in Washington, DC. Hornbostel had also studied at the École and thereafter gained experience with McKim, Mead & White and with Carrère & Hastings. Lord had studied at the Massachusetts

⁷⁸ Sandra L. Tatman, “Kelsey, Albert (1870–1950),” Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, “American Architects and Buildings,” American Architects and Buildings Project, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/25033. The T Square Club joined with the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects to organize annual architectural exhibitions. Bryn Mawr, “Access the T square club database,” <http://www.brynmawr.edu/iconog/tsq/tsqdefault.htm>.

⁷⁹ John Harbeson, foreword, in Theo B. White, *Paul Philippe Cret: Architect and Teacher* (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance, 1973), 13, 21.

⁸⁰ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 32, 84–85.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, xv, xvi.

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Institute of Technology and in Europe, was a partner in the firm of Lord and Hewitt, and served as director of the American School of Architecture in Rome from 1894 to 1896.

Entry names were kept sealed until the selection process ended. In June 1907, the committee announced Kelsey and Cret as the winners. Their design appealed to both city planners and architects, and its familiar Beaux-Arts civic building type complimented Washington's monumental physical character. Advocates of the McMillan Plan found its location would strengthen the intersection of the Mall and the Ellipse and its classically inspired architecture complemented the plan's vision for monumental classical federal buildings lining the Mall. "The corner on which the new building will be erected," reported the March 1907 *Bulletin*, "is one of the most important in the Burnham plan for making a 'City Beautiful'."⁸²

The design skillfully integrated the building's most important functions of informational and cultural exchange and diplomacy. It did this by creating a pleasant meeting place, far removed from the characteristic government public office building. The Pan American Union building felt more domestic; "intended to encourage the occupants to act *as if* in a 'large residence'." The design had, as Professor of Architecture Robert Alexander González described, "a monumental intimacy appropriate to the metaphor of a 'home' for an international institution." This conclusion is seconded by Elizabeth Grossman, a scholar of Cret's work who described the design as being socially inviting for effective diplomacy.⁸³

The intimacy and welcoming aspect of Cret's design philosophy is reflected in the building's materials and layout. Ornate bronze gates lead visitors into the lobby where they are immediately drawn to the light and foliage-filled patio. Here rich colors abound in the greenery of the plants, the red and black tile floor, and emblems in the cornice while water flows from the fountain. The composition also reflects a central principle of the Beaux-Arts school of design; one that emphasized the movement of visitors between spaces in extraordinarily dramatic ways.⁸⁴ Cret accomplished this effect by applying the École's favored *cour d'honneur* plan; an inverted U-plan type prominent in Beaux-Arts civic buildings. In the Pan American Union Building, visitors enter the U-plan via the entry hall which opens to the dramatic open-air patio. From the patio, occupants have easy access to all the primary functions associated with the library or up the stairs to the building's grand meeting place, the Hall of the Americas. "Cret's control of axes, of vistas, and of proportions," writes Grossman, "all supports the sensual materiality of his *parti* [the principle organizing idea] for the institution—a place where one feels at home."⁸⁵

After the Competition

When the award was announced, Cret had already left for France on his annual two-month vacation. He learned of the award in a letter from Kelsey which also reveals that the broad design concept, although submitted under the firm of Kelsey & Cret, belonged to Cret: "Your judgement in regard to making it a great private house, as it were," Kelsey wrote, "was exactly right."⁸⁶ Following execution of the contract in June 1907, the next few

⁸² Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 32.

⁸³ Ibid., 72, 74, 53; González, *Designing Pan-America*, 52. Grossman furthermore acknowledges the library as a place to gain mutual understanding and knowledge and the patio as a place "from which to consider, perhaps, the nature of this unique inter-American institution." Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 53.

⁸⁴ Dolkart, "The Architecture and Development of New York City."

⁸⁵ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 62. Grossman provides the description of the *cour d'honneur* plan type as "a courtyard screened from the street in which minor functions were distributed along the flanks and the most important ones located in the position of honor at the 'head' of the court." Ibid., 8.

⁸⁶ Ibid., quoting from Kelsey to Cret, 22 June 1907, 40. Grossman interprets this correspondence as "Kelsey's deference to Cret as the primary designer." Based on this correspondence and the design itself, Grossman refers to the design as belonging to Cret except

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months were spent revising the plans per the competition program's stipulation that the design be subject to recommendations by the Committee of Award. While Cret was on his trip, Kelsey revised the drawings, perhaps with some hesitancy, writing Cret on July 6: "I can manage everything until we get down to the actual contract drawings, for until that stage is reached, it will always be possible to make any changes you desire. I shall defer to your good judgment after you return." And on July 18, Kelsey wrote: "Do not allow the building to worry you.... While it will be natural for you to be uneasy in entrusting the preparation of these drawings so largely to me, I can assure you on the other hand that I shall do nothing that is startling, and I will in every way endeavor to make opportunities for you to give the finishing touches to the design upon your return."⁸⁷

Interior changes, as Grossman explains, impacted the intricacy of Cret's composition and the hierarchical relations between functions of the building. A comparison between the section drawings of the competition and the final design show that the assembly hall ceiling had been raised so that the library "seems sunken beneath it." The diagonal openings in the patio walls along the stairways removed the delineation between the first and second floors, so that visitors are directed from the "heart" of the building upward to the grand columned hall. In the final analysis, however, Cret's original design withstood these adjustments to exemplify his *parti*.⁸⁸

A Symbolic Narrative: Kelsey and Barrett's Pan American Identity

According to the competition program, the building design was to make Latin American dignitaries feel at home in a comfortable setting. That directive introduced a Pan-American architectural expression throughout the building and ultimately outdoors with the design of the Blue Aztec garden and the Director's apartment (annex). Because Kelsey, and not Cret, worked with the client, he had the chance to share with Director General Barrett, his preference to display symbolic ideas. Barrett's shared interest resulted in the bureau sending Kelsey on a trip to Cuba, Yucatán, and other parts of Mexico where he could gather ideas.⁸⁹

Thereafter, Kelsey and Cret collaborated on the ways and means to alter the building's classical design into an exemplary Pan-American monument by integrating an intricate system of Spanish and Latin American motifs into the classical system. In the cornice, stars placed inside classical circles symbolize nine American republics, youths representing North and South America were added on the façade, and the letter "A" appearing in the bronze entry gates stands for America. Inside, González contends that the tropical effect that extends straight from the front entrance to the rear garden counters the characteristically prominent central core of this plan type.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, Grossman sees the building as the first example of Cret's steadfast adeptness at integrating the interests and tastes of his US colleagues and client while retaining his Beaux-Arts priorities. Changes he made, particularly in the ornamentation, still vividly represent his *parti*. He did not view ornament as a narration, but rather a way to relate the building to its functions and provide ambiance to different rooms.⁹¹

The corner stone for the Pan American Union Building was laid on May 11, 1908. Dignitaries gathered at the building site to celebrate the occasion. Secretary of State Elihu Root spoke encouragingly about the work of the bureau, its place as a "temple dedicated to international friendship," and the presence the great building would have once completed:

where Kelsey's influence is specifically known. Fn. 56, 228.

⁸⁷ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 54.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 56, 58.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁹⁰ González, *Designing Pan-America*, 84–85. González also views the conversion of the library space to a meeting space as detrimental to the design's original sequential effect.

⁹¹ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 59.

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May the structure now begun stand for many generations to come as the visible evidence of mutual respect, esteem, appreciation, and kindly feeling between the peoples of all the Republics; may pleasant memories of hospitality and friendship gather about it, and may all the Americas come to feel that for them this place is home, for it is theirs, the product of a common effort and the instrument of a common purpose.⁹²

Dedication: Architecture & Symbolism

The building was completed twenty-three months and fifteen days after the laying of the corner stone. Speakers at the building's April 26, 1910, dedication reflected on the meaning of the building's symbolism. Kelsey's comments highlighted the Pan American expression artists helped incorporate into the building:

The front elevation was to interpret the two grand geographical divisions of the Pan American Union, and in the carrying out of this thought we have been ably seconded by Mr. Gutzon Borglum and Mr. Isidore Konti,...we have tried to recall the Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English origins of the people constituting this Union, while in the patio, pavement, and fountain we have attempted to recall something of the mystery of that strange twilight time in American history....I refer of course to the early Peruvians, Mayas, Zapotecas, Toltecas, Aztecs and others....

But over and above all significant sculpture, ornament and detail, we have placed two birds—not the spread-eagle and the hungry condor—but the birds of peace and freedom of North and South America, each regarding the other with an expression of unalloyed admiration, confidence and respect.⁹³

By 1910, Secretary Root was no longer part of the presidential cabinet, but was elected Senator from New York State. At the building's dedication, Senator Root emphasized how the building reflected Pan Americanism:

[Kelsey and Cret]...brought into happy companionship architectural suggestions of the North and of the South; and have wrought into construction and ornament in a hundred ways the art, the symbols, the traditions, and the history of all the American Republics; and they have made the building a true expression of the Pan Americanism of open mind and open heart for all that is true and noble and worthy of respect from whatever race or religion or language or custom in the western continents.⁹⁴

Mexican Ambassador, Señor Don Francisco L. de la Barra, speaking on behalf of Latin America, eloquently spoke of the building's design, noting how the architects effectively blended styles to interpret the institution's function:

Let us earnestly hope, ladies and gentlemen, that the dedication of the Palace of the American Republics may be the starting point of a new era of greater mutual esteem, ever more and more hearty among the nations of this hemisphere, merging their differences into a common ideal of peace, justice, and progress in the same manner in which the architects have so beautifully

⁹² Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 204–05.

⁹³ Ibid., 222.

⁹⁴ Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 224, 225.

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succeeded in harmonizing in this building, with exquisite art, the severity and grandeur of the American people with the grace and elegance of the Latin-American soul.⁹⁵

In 1913, an article by architectural critic C. Matlack Price addressed the significance of the Pan American Building design as well as the annex and grounds that had since been completed. He saw the 1910 building as a truly Pan-American building brought to life by its compelling architecture, art, and symbolism. Its design flows from the inviting openness in the sweeping curve of the driveway to the front terrace, the façade, the interior, and out the back through the garden to the terminating annex. “[T]here is a consistent expression of the dominant themes of the building....” writes Price, “There was harmony and accord throughout, among architects, sculptors, craftsmen and directing officials.”⁹⁶

The Pan American Union kept the building and its grounds open to Washington, DC, visitors and residents, even providing guides to explain the building’s purpose and its artistic features. A testament to the building’s popularity and symbolism as a learning tool, certainly an intent of Cret’s philosophy, appeared in the bureau’s 1914 to 1915 annual report. Annual visitation increased from 50 in the building’s first year (1910) to more than five hundred in 1915, a number that could exceed one thousand in late spring and early autumn. According to the report:

...tourist, sightseeing excursion, school, and other classes of visitors... come to note the noble and beautiful architecture of its building, its tropical patio, its dignified Hall of Americas, its corridor of historic standards and heroes, its unique Council Chamber, its interesting instructive reading, reference, maps and exhibition rooms, and its Aztec Garden of rare charm. An unusually large proportion of these visitors, coming for sightseeing and entertainment, go away with a new impression of the meaning of America and Pan America.⁹⁷

After the Pan American Union

Cret continued to associate with Kelsey (as Kelsey & Cret) on architectural competitions until 1909, when both architects began to work independently. In a letter dated November 10, 1910, Cret dissolved his association with Kelsey, stating: “I had to recognize that our points of view were too far apart to be reconciled.”⁹⁸ After splitting from Cret, Kelsey continued in private practice, winning the competition for Carson College for Orphan Girls in Flourtown, Pennsylvania, in 1916–1917, and designing buildings for Chautauqua College in New York. In the environs of Philadelphia, Kelsey designed residences and was influential in the planning of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.⁹⁹ Furthermore, scholars have shown that Kelsey also established himself through the Pan American commission. In 1925, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) appointed a committee on the Pan-American Congress of Architects. It included Kelsey as one of only two United States-based architects.¹⁰⁰ In 1930, the Pan American Union selected Kelsey to lead the design competition for

⁹⁵ Ibid., 228, 230.

⁹⁶ Matlack C. Price, “The Pan American Union and Its Annex: A Study in Plan & Detail,” *The Architectural Record* 34 (November 1913): 445, 449–50, www.catalog.hatitrust.org/Record/000497481.

⁹⁷ *The Pan American Union Annual Report, 1913–14—1919–20*, Annual Report, July 1, 1914, to June 30, 1915; for quote, *Annual Report, 1919–20*, 6. Visitation to the building and grounds were exceeded only by those visiting the Capitol, the Library of Congress, and the White House.

⁹⁸ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 232, fn. 82. Grossman suggests that Cret is referring to “their points of view about architectural design and thus, by implication, the significance of architecture.” Nonetheless, the Commission of Fine Arts archive has designs completed in the 1930s for the Pan American Administration Building by Kelsey and Cret.

⁹⁹ American Institute of Architects membership file: “Albert Kelsey (1870–1950),” AIA Archive & Library, Washington, DC.

¹⁰⁰ González, *Designing Pan-America*, 100–101.

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the Christopher Columbus Memorial Light House to be built in Santo Domingo. Kelsey's obituary emphasized his influence beyond the United States and referenced the Pan American Union Building. "His interests were diverse, and his influence recognized in Europe, and in South America, as well as here.... As an associate of Paul Cret in the winning of the competition for the Pan American building in Washington, he brought an interest and vitality of unusual charm, attested by the continuous pilgrimage of visitors to the building, who show their love and admiration for it."¹⁰¹

Cret's next prominent building was the Beaux-Arts style Indianapolis Public Library (1914–1917), a design competition in which Cret was one of three architects invited to compete in 1914.¹⁰² His innovative work here centered on a plan to meet the growing importance of home borrowing in the library system.¹⁰³ That summer Cret was in France on his annual visit and did not return for four and one-half years. World War I had started and he stayed to serve with the French Army until 1919.¹⁰⁴

Upon returning from France, Cret continued to win high profile competitions with widely praised designs. In 1919, the Detroit's Arts Commission contacted Cret to design a building for the Detroit Institute of Arts (1919–1927) modeled after the Pan American Union Building. They were purportedly impressed by the "psychological effect" of its patio and foliage, and wanted a building that possessed the Pan American Union's "welcoming scale and distinctive ambiance." His classical design was noteworthy for addressing museum design issues. In keeping with Cret's aspect of monumental intimacy, Grossman describes the building as having the effect of a "large private residence with a remarkable art collection...open to the public."¹⁰⁵

Cret's work influenced architectural students beyond his thirty-four years of teaching at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Architecture.¹⁰⁶ In 1923, the program and plans for the Pan American Union Building appeared in *Architectural Composition*, a book written by Nathaniel Cortland Curtis, professor of architecture and head of the School of Architecture at Tulane University in Louisiana, to educate students in the Beaux-Arts method of design. Curtis specifically cites Cret's decision to make the building a 'home' and describes the atrium as a "beautiful and well-known example...conceived in the classic spirit." He expounds on how the building's functions should be subordinate to the building's ability to serve as the home of the American Republics, one imbued with a monumental and palatial character.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, "Albert Kelsey (1870–1950)," <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd1023474.aspx>, obituary published in the Journal of the American Institute of Architects 14, no. 1 (July 1950): 40, http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/I-L/Kelsey_obit_Journal_July_1950.pdf. In 1930, he received the decoration of the Commander of the Royal Order of Isabella in recognition of his work as technical adviser to the Pan American Union in the competition for the Columbus Memorial Lighthouse. Tatman, "Kelsey, Albert."

¹⁰² The other competitors included prominent Beaux-Arts architectural firms of McKim, Mead & White and Carrère & Hastings. The library was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 as a classic work of superior distinction and is also a contributing resource to the NHL Indiana War Memorials Historic District significant for illustrating Beaux-Arts and City Beautiful principles.

¹⁰³ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 70.

¹⁰⁴ Later in his service he functioned as a Lieutenant Liaison Officer with the American Expeditionary Forces.

¹⁰⁵ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 102. The *Detroit Industry Murals*, Detroit Institute of Arts was designated as an NHL in 2013.

¹⁰⁶ Cret's relations with the University of Pennsylvania must have been quite strong. After the death of his wife, Cret bequeathed his estate to the institution. Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, xxi. Louis Kahn studied at Penn under Cret and worked in his office between 1919 and 1930.

¹⁰⁷ Nathaniel Cortland Curtis, *Architectural Composition* (Cleveland: J. H. Jansen, 1923), 87, 175-79, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101067658698;view=1up;seq=9>, 176-79. Curtis also cites how the assembly hall, as a central motive, is reflected in the way it rises above the subordinate masses and how the building's spaciousness contributes to its importance as a gathering place.

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In the late 1920s, Cret transitioned to a new or modern classicism, sometimes known as the “stripped classical” mode, in which he gradually distilled the ornamental palette he had used on the Pan American Union Building “into one of flat piers, columns without bases or capitals, minimal moldings, and unassertive cornices.”¹⁰⁸ This austere aesthetic is powerfully illustrated by the Hartford County Building (1930) in Connecticut, and the Folger Shakespeare Library (1932) and the Federal Reserve Board Building (1935), both in Washington, DC. Modern classicism also lent itself to commemorative architecture and he became well known for designing war memorials. Overall, by the early 1930s Cret’s designs for memorials, buildings, and also bridges “gave his oeuvre a cast quite unlike that of any other architect in the United States.”¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

The Pan American Union Headquarters has been widely recognized by critics, scholars, and the AIA for its contribution to architectural design during the height of the Beaux-Arts movement. According to González, the building exceeded the prevalent standards of civic architecture in Washington in 1910 with its ability to convey the Pan American movement within a Beaux-Arts design. Contemporary architectural critic C. Matlack Price questioned whether any other building in Washington “has so much to say, that commands so much attention, that exerts such an influence?” His 1913 assessment emphasized the property’s successful execution and importance for American architectural practice. He concluded that the building “should constitute a criterion for really conscientious architects in every public library, museum, statehouse or other monumental building.”¹¹⁰

According to the AIA, the building established Cret’s reputation as one of the foremost practitioner of the Beaux-Arts style. In 1938, the American Institute of Architects awarded Cret its Gold Medal, an award given to architects in recognition of a significant body of work having lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture. The award cited the Pan American Union Building as one of two buildings that best characterized Cret’s work. The second building, his Folger Shakespeare Library (1932), established Cret as the United States’ leading modern classicist. While Cret is best known as the innovator of the modern “stripped classical” style in architecture, his body of work illustrates the end of Beaux-Arts historicism and the rise of modernism. Carter Wiseman, former architectural critic for *New York* magazine and lecturer at the Yale School of Architecture, states that this talent made Cret “one of the leading examples of the architectural generation that formed the bridge between neoclassicism and modernism.”¹¹¹

In 1946, the professional journal, *The Federal Architect*, devoted its final issue to Paul Cret who had passed away on September 8, 1945. Due to a lack of federal funding, the AIA paid to distribute the journal in appreciation of his genius.¹¹²

Although much of the architectural critique was and is positive, the genesis, location, and architectural symbolism of the building also can be interpreted as a manifestation of the United States’ domination of the Pan-American experiment in its early days. Set at the heart of the United States capital, largely funded by an

¹⁰⁸ Handlin, *American Architecture*, 172.

¹⁰⁹ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 182. The Philadelphia Architects and Building website contains a list of 334 projects.

¹¹⁰ González, *Designing Pan-America*, 101; Price, “The Pan American Union,” 445, 455.

¹¹¹ The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, “Paul Philippe Cret (1876–1945),” public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd1009315.aspx; Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 61; Carter Wiseman, “Cret, Paul Philippe 1876–1945,” in R. Stephen Sennott, ed., *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture* (NY: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), <https://archive.org/stream/EncyclopediaOf20thCenturyArchitecture/Encyclopedia%20of%2020th%20Century%20Architecture/jvu.txt>.

¹¹² John Harbeson, “Paul Cret: October 23, 1876 . . . September 8, 1945, Many-Sided Man,” 7, in *The Federal Architect* 14, no. 2 (Final Number, 1946), public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/aia%20scans/C-E/Cret&%20issue%20Federal%20architect_optimized.pdf.

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American captain of industry, and expressing the grand classicism adopted by this country with mostly decorative Latinized accents, the Pan American Union Building both announces its history and its global aspirations in its architecture.

CRITERION 4: Comparison of Properties

A comparison of buildings, particularly Cret's, is a daunting task. At the forefront of Cret's work are his three most prominent Beaux-Arts buildings. These are included in Grossman's book as well as in the *Masterpiece of Architecture in the United States*,¹¹³ a 1930 study conducted to identify the highest achievements of contemporary architecture in the United States between 1900 and 1930. It began with a list of 150 buildings compiled by the authors and, interestingly, with the assistance of Paul Cret and Philadelphia architect Milton Medary. The list was sent to a number of leading architects who were asked to select five in each building type category and to make any changes to the original lists which were altered and then voted upon. Like Grossman's work, the publication included Cret's Pan American Union Headquarters along with the Indianapolis Public Library (1917), and the Detroit Museum of Fine Arts (1927). These two latter buildings are thus included in this comparison.

Cret's first phase of traditional Beaux-Arts design, prior to beginning his work in modern classicism in 1926, included the Pan American Union Headquarters, the Indianapolis Public Library (1917), and the Detroit Institute of Arts (1927). Although opened in October 1917, Cret won the **Indianapolis Public Library** design competition in 1913. The building's completion was delayed by Cret's service in Europe during World War I. Hailed by the *Architectural Forum* in September 1918 as the best example of classic architecture in the country, the building was completed in the Greek Doric Style with *bas relief* sculptural details that relate to the function of the library.¹¹⁴ It's a prime example of the special attention Cret paid to designing a building around its function. In this case, his design of a delivery room, where books were delivered to the reader and checked out, was innovative in library planning. A 1941 critique singled out this room as a "first impression not to be forgotten" that made the building "supreme among great libraries."¹¹⁵ Cret had increased the size of the delivery room fifty percent more than the program called for within a grand two-story space. Hence, the prominence given to the space highlighted the significance of the home borrowing service that represented the democratic ideals of an American institution.¹¹⁶ While the building is comparable to the Pan American Union in illustrating Cret's design philosophy, it differs in types from methods Cret employed to integrate symbolism into the entire Pan American Union's Beaux-Arts design.

The Arts Commission of the **Detroit Institute of Arts** (1927) (The *Detroit Industry Murals*, Detroit Institute of Arts, NHL, 2014), as earlier noted, hired Cret in November 1919 to design its museum based on the scale and ambiance that attracted visitors to the Pan American Union Building. Like the Pan American Building, the Detroit Institute of Arts building incorporates artistic works such as Antoine Coysevo's "River God," Philippe

¹¹³ Edward Warren Hoak and Willis Humphrey Church, *Masterpieces of Architecture in the United States: Museums, Libraries, Churches and Other Public Buildings* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2002; 1930; repr., Scribner, 2013). Cret wrote the preface. Eighteen buildings made the final selection. Included under museums was the Building for the Freer Collection (1920), under libraries were the Boston (1895) and Detroit (1921) public libraries, and under public buildings the Nebraska State Capitol (not completed, Cret design, lost competition) and the Temple of the Scottish Rite (1916) in Washington. Milton Medary was employed with the firm Zantzinger, Borie and Medary that had worked with Cret as associated architects on the Indianapolis Public Library.

¹¹⁴ Lawrence Downey, "Central Library – Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library," National Register of Historic Places–Registration Form, 1975, Section 8.

¹¹⁵ Grossman, *Civic Architecture of Paul Cret*, 65, quoted in Joseph L. Wheeler and Alfred Morton Githens in *The American Public Library Building* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), 300.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 78.

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Magnier's "Nymph and Cupid," and Rodin's "The Thinker." Once again, Cret departed from established museum planning and presented innovations that became the basis for the general scheme. In particular, he created a garden court replete with a fountain and plantings. Overall, Grossman considers this work to be the climax of Cret's first phase of work in the United States that began with the Pan American Union Building. Although representative of Cret's fluency in Beaux-Arts, the building no longer retains high integrity of design. A major change to the Garden Court made in 1932 remade the character of the space. Mexican muralist Diego Rivera painted a fresco on the court's four walls and the museum removed the central fountain and foliage. As Cret wrote to architect Albert Kahn, "...changing the appearance of an important element is like having a painting refinished by other than the artist."¹¹⁷ Another change negatively impacting integrity is the addition of two wings dating to 1965 and 1971.

Other outstanding Beaux-Arts landmarks such as the **New York Public Library** (1902–1909) (NHL, 1965) by and Hastings and the **Boston Public Library** (1888–1895) by McKim, Mead & White possess allegorical references, but no properties overall has the extensive Pan American references seen at the Pan American Union Building. Interestingly, one building remains from the 1901 Pan-American Exposition held in Buffalo, New York, to encourage economic ties between North and South America. The **Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society Building** (NHL, 1987) served as the New York State Building in the exposition. Aspects of the neoclassical building symbolize the turn-of-the-century interventionist democracy of America, yet the edifice displays no Pan American features.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 137, Cret quote on 138–139.

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6. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

Ownership of Property

Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Boundary of Property:

Contributing

Buildings: 3
Sites: 1 (landscape)
Structures: 1 (pool)
Objects: 2 (Aztec god sculpture & stone wall)
Total: 7

Noncontributing

Buildings:
Sites:
Structures:
Objects: 27 (outdoor statutes & metal sculpture)
Total: 27

PROVIDE PRESENT AND PAST PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPERTY

(Please see specific guidance for type of resource[s] being nominated)

The 1910 Pan American Union Building and its 1912 annex sit on a spacious five-acre block in northwest Washington, DC, at the corner of Constitution Avenue and 17th Street beside the National Mall and the Ellipse. Centered on the far eastern side of the tract is the Pan American Union Building (approximately 160 x 160 feet) with its classical (Greek and Roman) forms and features, elaborate detailing, massive plans, and heavy masonry. Pan American allegorical features, in the form of sculpture and other decorative elements, are integrated with the architecture. The building sits back from 17th Street and is rectangular-shaped with two stories plus a full basement and a flat roof over the building's front three-quarters. Centered on the far west side of the block, directly behind the main building, is the two-story Mediterranean style annex (approximately 36 x 98 feet) with stucco walls and a hipped roof. The annex, built as a residence for the organization's Director General, has since been converted to a museum. The building exterior and its interior loggia, visible from outside through three glass archways, contribute to the property. Between the main building and the annex the Aztec garden and reflecting pool express a Mediterranean setting that unifies the property. A contributing stone sculpture of an Aztec god atop a pedestal sits at the west end of the pool. The museum administration building on the northwest corner of the property was originally built in 1816 as a stable as part of acclaimed American architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe's designs for the Van Ness family estate. It served as a garage for the Pan American Union.

Added objects to the grounds that do not contribute to the design include modern art pieces and several sculptural works of prominent artists. These are not part of the final plan, but date to the mid-to-late twentieth century, and do not directly relate to the national significance of the property.

The Pan American Union Building and Annex retains the vast majority of the essential physical features that enable the property to convey its significance as the "home," headquarters, and meeting place of an inter-governmental Pan American organization. These features relate to the Pan American *setting* and *feeling* created between the Pan American Union Building, Annex and Aztec Garden; the *workmanship* and *materials* of the allegorical references to the Americas in the Pan American Union Building and Annex; and the *design* of

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the Pan American Union Building and Annex. The property's *location* reflects the organization's significance in being prominently located near the White House and on the National Mall near other places of government.

The property also retains the essential physical features that enable it to convey Paul Cret's architectural philosophy that a civic building design should be commensurate with its monumentality, convey its function, and possess an intimacy that invites the participation of Latin American delegates. These features relate to the main building with its exemplary *design, feeling, and workmanship* of the Beaux-Arts style, and the Latin/European allegorical references.

The property retains its original setting on a prominent corner bounded by C Street to the north, Constitution Avenue to the south, 17th Street to the east, 18th Street to the west, and Virginia Avenue to the southwest. Monumental buildings and well-designed parks surround the block. To the east, facing the main building and 17th Street is the Ellipse.¹¹⁸ To the north is the Daughters of the American Revolution's Constitution Hall and to the south are the open spaces of West Potomac Park and Constitution Garden. To the west on the opposite side of 18th Street is the Simón Bolívar statue and plaza.

The plot plan for the landscape created by Cret and Kelsey unifies the individual buildings on the property particularly as it relates to the integrity of *location, setting, and feeling*. The main building and its Mediterranean setting are intimately connected through the pool and terrace transition elements which are axially linked to the interior spaces and the greater landscape that is typical of the Latin American elements which inspired the design.¹¹⁹ Limited alterations to the landscape, main building, and annex bear little impact on the property's high degree of integrity and are further described within the following physical narrative.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

The property's resources are described within five basic categories:

- The Pan American Union Building (now the Organization of American States Building or main building)
- The Blue Aztec Garden including the blue-tiled pool partially enclosed with a low open wall and paths
- The Annex (now the Museum of the Americas) that provides an indoor-outdoor transition to the terrace and Blue Aztec garden setting
- The Casita (Museum Administration Building; formerly used as a garage)
- The Landscape and the property's open park-like setting.

¹¹⁸ The Ellipse is the elliptical-shaped park that extends from the South Lawn of the White House to Constitution Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets.

¹¹⁹ Integrity analysis of the Pan American Union Building is primarily based on historic photographs and text contained in John Barrett's book, *The Pan American Union* (1911), Chapter III, entitled "Pan America's New Building." Analysis of the Annex is primarily based on the article by architectural critic C. Matlack Price entitled, "The Pan American Union and Its Annex: A Study in Plan and Detail," (1913). Important information in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings database for the Pan American Union Building, Annex, and Gardens includes as-built floor plans, 1950 alteration plans for the Library to the Council meeting room conversion, and a plot plan that includes the pool and annex at https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/image_gallery.cfm/76458. Current floor plans appear on the OAS website <http://www.oas.org/en/about/mnb1.asp>.

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PAN AMERICAN UNION BUILDING

The Pan American Union Building stands two stories high, plus a full basement, and is largely constructed of white Georgia marble. The building conveys two major design influences: the Beaux-Arts tradition through its decorative elements and spatial plan, and its symbolic tribute to Latin and North American cultural traditions. The building exterior remains nearly as built and reflects its original Beaux-Arts style and Pan American symbolism. All the windows were recently replaced but retain their original design. All the important interior spaces are highly visible areas where the organization of space, ornamentation, materials, and decorative elements convey the Beaux-Arts style and Pan American symbolism. Some interior changes made to accommodate new uses reinforce the evolution of the organization during the period of significance.

Exterior

Façade (East Elevation)

The façade features an entry sequence highly evocative of the Beaux-Arts style. Large bronze torchères flank a wide ceremonial flight of marble steps. A circular drive and a low flight of steps then lead to the 17th Street façade. The façade is divided into three main segments: a central portico, flanking pavilions, and two-story wings. The central portico has a triple arcade entry divided by pilasters and topped by a paneled frieze, projecting roof, and balustrade. The letter “A,” signifying the Americas, appears in the ornamental keystone of each arch. The entrance arches are decorated with richly embellished bronze grilles protecting immense glass and bronze doors.¹²⁰ Set above the cornice, a projecting gabled red-clay tile roof is surmounted by a balustrade.¹²¹ In the frieze and at the base of the building, moldings incorporating aboriginal decorative forms replace classical motifs.

Above the portico arches, a panel is inscribed with the name of the organization per its 1948 charter, “ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES.”¹²² The panel is flanked by rich decorative designs carved by artist Isidore Konti. On the north, an infant of the “Caucasian race,” and on the south an infant of the “American Indian type,” sit among an abundance of fruits and other accessories that symbolize the North and South.¹²³ Konti also created the richly carved capitals on the six pilasters located between and flanking the entry arches. Here a symbolic figure representing peace stands on a globe of the Western Hemisphere. In the cornice, conventional rosettes are alternated with a rosette with a five-pointed star, the symbol of nine of the American republics.

At the base of the flanking pavilions are marble sculptures of a woman and a youth. The sculpture on the north, by artist Gutzon Borglum, represents North America; and the one on the south, by Konti, represents South America.¹²⁴ The torch the North American woman holds and the olive branch the South American woman holds represent knowledge and peace, principles of the inter-American system. On the North American woman, an

¹²⁰ The grillwork is inspired by the grille of the Cathedral of Zaragoza, Spain.

¹²¹ The balustrade is derived from the Chihuahua Cathedral, the main ecclesiastical building of the Catholic Church in Chihuahua, Mexico.

¹²² Two inscriptions preceded this one, the first in 1910 being the INTERNATIONAL UNION OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS and the second being the PAN AMERICAN UNION. In the 1960s, the name read ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES. Stotzer, *Organization of American States*, 67.

¹²³ Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 112. Konti is a Vienna-born sculptor working in the Beaux-Arts tradition of classically inspired subject matter. He studied in Vienna and Rome, came to New York City in 1892, and eventually settled in Yonkers, New York, where he lived until his death in 1938, “Isidore Konti,” <http://www.askart.com/artist/Isidore%20Konti/89934/Isidore%20Konti.aspx>.

¹²⁴ Borglum is a Danish-American sculptor famous for creating the monumental presidents' heads at Mount Rushmore, South Dakota; the famous carving on Stone Mountain near Atlanta; and other public works of art, including a head of Abraham Lincoln, exhibited in Theodore Roosevelt's White House.

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eagle appears on her chest and a star on her forehead. On the South American woman, a condor appears on her head. A small mechanical wheel at the North American woman's feet is an allegory of the northern continent's industrial awakening. The boys symbolize the youthfulness of the continents and the promise of the future. The North American youth has wings on the ankles and temple. The South American youth holds a sphere and a parrot.

Two bas-reliefs panels, crafted by Konti and set high in the pavilions, capture significant moments in North and South American history. The south panel depicts the July 1822 meeting in Guayaquil (in Ecuador) between two heroes of the struggle for South American independence: the Liberator Simón Bolívar and General Jose de San Martin. The north panel shows George Washington bidding farewell to his generals at the close of the American Revolution. Over these panels are a North American eagle and a South American condor sculpted by Solon Borglum.¹²⁵

The two-story end pavilions are articulated with rusticated quoins, French doors, second floor balconies with ornamental bronze railings, and a low crowning parapet. A marble balustrade crowns the central façade and pavilions.

North and South Elevations

The side elevations are mirror images with a seven-bay middle section and slightly projecting end pavilions. All of the windows are casement. Those on the first floor are sixteen-light with a four-light transom, and those on the second are twenty-light with eight-light transoms. The frieze continues the length of the sides. A taller roof line (over the Hall of the Americas) has a central elliptical window, colored exposed rafters, and a hipped tiled roof. The east end pavilion has one French door with grill and one window, while the west end pavilion has one second floor French door with grill and two first floor windows. A narrow first floor window precedes the west pavilion. Quoins mark the corners of the building and the ends of the central portion and the pavilions.

West (rear) Elevation

The rear side is dominated by a projecting five-bay section. On the first floor is a central glass and wood double doorway flanked by two sets of three-light windows with a three-light transom above. The bay ends with small oval-shaped decorative windows. A frieze between the first and second floor shows the letter "A." Two sets of narrow paired six-light windows are located on the inset portion of the first floor beneath a stairway. The grand second floor doors and windows give a Palladian effect. The paired doors have a balustrade, multi-light sidelights, and an arched transom. The inset second floor has a French door with a transom and grill work.

Ceremonial marble stairs on the north and south sides of the rear elevation descend to a spacious flagstone-paved terrace enclosed on its sides by a balustrade. Ten-foot high bronze lanterns terminate the balustrades. The lanterns are crowned by an eagle and are chased with intricate designs that incorporate intertwined serpents and other pre-Columbian motifs. A small equestrian sculpture of Simón Bolívar stands in the center of the terrace.

Interior—First Floor

The building interior is organized around its focal point, a two-story patio under a glass roof filled with abundant greenery and Latin American symbolism. On the patio's east side is the opulent entrance hall where a vista extends straight to the patio. On its west side is a gallery/lobby space that leads to the Simón Bolívar Room, a vast conference room that was formerly a library. On the north and south sides of the patio are ceremonial stairs. At the top of the stairs is a foyer known as the Gallery of Heroes leading into the immense

¹²⁵ Solon Borglum (brother of Gutzon Borglum) was an American sculptor most noted for his depiction of frontier life.

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Hall of the Americas. To the south of the hall is the Francisco de Miranda Room (Governing Board Room), the Council meeting room and to the north is the Christopher Columbus Room (Committee Dining Room). A series of offices and meeting rooms line the north and south sides of the patio on both floors. Important interior spaces on the first floor are the entry hall, patio, the library/council meeting space, and the stairways flanking the patio. The rooms are described below with the current name listed first and the historic name in parenthesis.

Entrance Hall (Vestibule)

The vaulted two-story white marble entrance hall is rectangular in shape with marble floors. Walls and vaults of imitation Caen stone are enriched with garlands featuring maize and sunflowers, plants indigenous to the New World.¹²⁶ Four large bronze medallions sculpted by Konti adorn the hall, each topped with classical trophies of eagles, flags, arms and cornucopias. The two medallions above the entrance arches memorialize law and patriotism; while the two over the central opening to the patio celebrate enlightenment and peace.

On the hall's south end is a Commemorative Plaque in Tribute to the Pan American Union (the precursor to the Organization of American States).¹²⁷ Its large black frame is profusely decorated with Mexican pre-Columbian motifs. Gold lettering summarizes the building's origins and the Pan American Union's early administrative make-up.

At either end of the long entrance hall are pairs of black, white-veined "grand Antique" marble columns with bronze capitals and bases. Here grand stairs flank the patio and ascend to the second floor.¹²⁸ Three open arches, reiterating the three arched entries to the building, lead into the patio.

The Patio

The patio's square floor plan features slightly raised planting beds at each corner for North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean. Rubber, cacao, coffee, palm, and other trees fill the corners with lush greenery.¹²⁹ Notable in the southeast corner is the Peace Tree, a gift from United States President Taft when he dedicated the building in 1910. At the patio's center stands a pink marble octagonal fountain executed by American sculpture Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.¹³⁰ Carved figures taken from the Aztec and the Maya native cultures of Mesoamerica adorn the second basin and are separated by gargoyle-like stylized snake heads representing Quetzalcoatl, the "feathered serpent" and chief deity of the Aztecs. The central pillar has three sculptured figures separated by stacked Mayan hieroglyphs. The first figure is a richly adorned Indian warrior or priest, inspired by the beautifully carved stelae (stone columns) of the Maya; the second is a young Indian male with an animal skin headdress and cape; and the third, a woman half hidden in shadows.

The red-clay tile floor, laid in a basket-weave pattern, is inlaid with black stone decorations inspired by Mayan art. Decorations on the east and west sides depict images based on the bas relief carvings of the Palace of Palenque, the Mayan archaeological site in the State of Chiapas, Mexico. On the main or eastern access, a

¹²⁶ A light creamy-yellow Jurassic limestone quarried in northwestern France near the city of Caen.

¹²⁷ This office originally served as the reception room for ambassadors and other dignitaries.

¹²⁸ Four busts at the bottom of the two staircases represent the art of native peoples. Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, "Democrat of the Americas" and historic leader of the Peruvian Aprista Party (1895–1979); Galo Plaza Lasso, "Universal Ecuadorian," former President of Ecuador and fourth OAS Secretary General (1906–1987); Alberto Lleras Camargo, A "great American," Former President of Colombia and first OAS Secretary General (1906–1990); and Andrés Bello, "Humanist of the Americas," (1781–1865).

¹²⁹ As the *Spirit Lake Beacon* newspaper described: "The plants and flowers are of the rarest tropical kind, and parrots and cockatoos are on perches among the foliage and emit their hideous noises." "Dr. Hutchins Commences his Washington Letters for the Beacon," *Spirit Lake Beacon*, November 11, 1915, source provided by the National Park Service. The patio's fountain reflects the Mediterranean and Spanish tradition of patios with fountains placed in houses and often in public buildings.

¹³⁰ Whitney founded the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City in 1931 to feature work by living artists.

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standing priest or aristocrat holding a staff and ceremonial knife is flanked by two seated men. Across the patio, to the west, a man sits cross-legged on a stylized zoomorphic (animal form) throne, receiving an offering from an individual below him. Another sequence of four groups containing four figures is adapted from an altar in the Mayan city of Copán in Honduras. Paths leading away from the fountain also display two large tiles modeled after the pre-Inca site of Tiwanaku in Bolivia.¹³¹

Doors on the north and south walls topped with cartouches in glazed polychromed terra cotta depict maps of the Western Hemisphere. A continuous decorative frieze above the four white stucco walls bears twenty-two escutcheons (a shield bearing a coat of arms) representing the twenty-one republics that comprised the original International Union of American Republics and one for Canada which joined the OAS in 1990. These are interspersed with the names of persons important in the Western Hemisphere. Lintel soffits on the second-floor balconies have glazed polychromed terra cotta panels containing a dove that symbolizes peace. A bracketed roof eave in polychromed wood with a sloping red-tile roof, inspired by the Municipal Palace of Barcelona, projects seven feet into the patio space.¹³²

Two minor alterations are seen in the patio. On its north and south doors, the number of window lights in its upper half has changed from four to two, but the lights retain their original slim rectangular shape. On the arch-shaped (hoodmold) windows flanking the doors, the sash has been removed and the glass appears as a single pane. These changes had little impact on the patio's overall integrity of spatial organization, volume, design, and materials. The feeling and association to Latin culture remain tangible.

The Marcus Garvey Gallery (Exhibit Corridor and Lobby)

Passing through the west side of the patio is a gallery space, also known as the Interior Gallery, often used to present special exhibits. This rectangular one-story room is paved in terrazzo with a dark-green marble perimeter. Its restrained decor consists mainly of busts and commemorative plaques.¹³³ Adjacent to the gallery, a lounge area leads into the Simón Bolívar Room.

Liberator Simón Bolívar Room (formerly the Reading Room/Library)

This room, originally the Columbus Memorial Library, is the main conference room of the Permanent Council, one of the OAS's highest deliberative bodies. Originally, the reading room consisted of a large rectangular space articulated by piers that divided the space into five bays with deep, elaborately adorned ceiling beams. Each end of the oblong room contained a raised niche flanked by freestanding columns. In 1951, the library moved to the basement to make way for a larger council meeting space. The original library's "map table" was removed, translation booths were added to the south end, and the ornate ceiling was covered.

A 2006 restoration uncovered a number of original architectural details, such as wall and ceiling moldings, that had been obscured when the space was converted to a conference room. Interpretation booths built into the south end of the room for the simultaneous interpretation of the proceedings into English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish (the four official languages of the OAS) fit neatly between columns and bear little impact on this originally open space. A side aisle running along the western length of the room once accommodated open

¹³¹ The Organization of American States, *The House of the Americas* (Washington, DC: A Meadows Press Book, 2008), 45.

¹³² Reference to the Municipal Palace at Barcelona from Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 122.

¹³³ The busts include Eugenio Mario de Hostos: Puerto Rican writer and educator (1839–1930); Francisco de Vitoria: the Spanish theologian of the University of Salamanca who laid the foundations of modern international law (1483–1546); a Ceramic Drinking Fountain; Tiradentes: Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, a hero and martyr of the Independence of Brazil (1746–1792); Benito Juárez: Commemorative plaque in tribute to former President of Mexico Benito Juárez (1806–1872); and Henry Clay: North American statesman and the father of Pan-Americanism (1777–1852).

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stacks and now contains extra seating for conference observers. Today, the room retains much of its original character.

General José de San Martín Room (former rooms for statisticians, trade experts, and translators)

North of the Liberator Simón Bolívar Room is the San Martín Room used today for various meetings, including working breakfasts and the occasional press conference. Originally designed as three interconnecting rooms for bureau staff, the space has been modernized with carpet and a drop ceiling with recessed lighting. Based on historic photographs, the original office spaces were sparsely adorned and separated by wood and glass partitions. The wall facing the building interior, once glass, has since been converted to a solid wall at an unknown time. Because these rooms have always been secondary, private work spaces, the changes do not detract from the building's overall integrity.

Toussaint L'Ouverture Delegates Lounge (former stack room)

To the north of the patio is a former stack room, today a lounge used by delegations of the member states. While the room retains its original dimensions, a 1911 photo shows the materials and feeling of the room have been altered. Its original sparse appearance has been modernized with carpeting, molded wainscoting, and a drop ceiling with recessed light and new hanging light fixtures. Also, the design on the original floor plan shows access to the room only from the adjacent librarian's office. According to the original drawings the room only connected to the adjacent librarian's office on the west end. Its conversion from a stack room to a lounge, most likely completed in the 1980s when the library moved to the administration building, added arched openings to the hallway corridor. Because the stack room has always been a secondary private space for access by the librarians, the conversion does not detract from the building's overall integrity.

Private Offices

Private offices, not accessed for this nomination, line the south side of the first floor. This space formerly housed a number of staff and functions including a reception room; statistician, editors, compilers, clerks, and stenographers; chief clerk and editor of the *Bulletin*; archives and files. Three rooms each divided by glass and frame were replaced with private offices. Because these rooms have always been secondary, private work spaces, the changes do not detract from the building's overall integrity. The walls facing the inside corridor, once comprised of large frosted glass door openings with side lights and arched transom, are now solid walls. This change in material has little impact overall.

Interior—Second Floor

Important spaces on the second floor are the Hall of Americas, Hall of Heroes, the Governing Board Room, and the former dining room.

The Gallery of Heroes (former Gallery of Patriots and National Flags)

At the top of the ceremonial marble stairs, overlooking the patio, the Gallery of Heroes extends along the west (rear), north, and south sides of the building; leaving the east side over the entry hall exposed. On the west side, at the top of the stairs, a broad foyer suspends the national flags of the American republics and five bronze chandeliers hang from the barrel-vaulted ceiling. Twenty-three busts of great visionaries and patriots of North, Central, and South America, and the Caribbean atop a red-marble pedestal line the foyer and continue down the north and south sides.¹³⁴ Like the first floor, the walls are imitation Caen stone. Wood and glass double doors,

¹³⁴ The busts are of Francisco de Miranda, Eugenio Espejo, Hipólito Unanue, Francisco José de Paula Santander, Simón Bolívar, José de San Martín, Bernardo O'Higgins, José Gervasio Artigas, Antonio José de Sucre, Justo Rufino Barrios, Juan Pablo Duarte, José Bonifácio, George Washington, Benito Juárez, Marcus Garvey, José Martí, Miguel Larreynaga, Tomás Herrera, José Gaspar

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set within red Alicante marble surrounds, line the west wall leading into the Hall of the Americas. Above each door is a great cartouche, with relief designs contrasting ancient and modern methods of transportation between Europe and the Americas: the caravel of the era of Columbus, and the steamship of the twentieth century.

The Hall of the Americas

This grand expansive space maintains its historic use for hosting important ceremonies and meetings, official presidential visits, receptions, and concerts.¹³⁵ The richly decorated hall measures 100 feet long, 65 feet wide, and 45 feet high. A north/south five-bay, vaulted, central nave is divided from lateral aisles to the east and west by four sets of paired Ionic columns with fluted shafts on raised pedestals. The octagonal-shaped ends of the nave feature an ornate Beaux-Arts composition. At its center, a classical portico is crowned at nave height by an oval leaded-glass oculus trimmed with rich floral garlands. To each side of the porticoes is a classical niche, above which the garlands from the oculus entwine a shield bearing the word “PAX,” Latin for peace.

The flooring is polished oak herringbone parquet, and three crystal chandeliers hang from the central vault. Profuse ornamental plasterwork is found throughout the room. Braided garlands form bold projecting moldings that frame the ceiling coffers. The decorative program incorporates a variety of allegorical motifs that relate to the Americas as well as to Western classical traditions. Five majestic arched doors and windows line the west side. At the southern end of the hall are a stage and the busts of two United States philanthropists: Andrew Carnegie who provided funds to construct the building, and Leo S. Rowe who served as Director General of the Pan American Union from 1920 to 1946.

The Christopher Columbus Room (Committee Dining Room)

This room connects to the north end of the Hall of Americas. The room was originally intended as an extension of the Hall on festive occasions and, with the connecting doors closed, as a room for hosting moderately sized dinners. Today the room is used for various working meetings of the OAS. Like the Hall, its ceiling is opulently decorated and the walls have Mayan lights.

The Francisco de Miranda Room (Governing Board Room)

The room connects to the south end of the Hall of the Americas via the three sets of doors within the Hall's Palladian portico. It served as the meeting room for the Governing Board of the Pan American Union until the 1950s and is luxuriously decorated in a scheme evocative of its original design. Gold brocade-covered walls rise from the paneled wood wainscot up to the perimeter frieze. The frieze has four gilt relief panels modeled by sculptor Sally James Farnham of New York.¹³⁶ Each panel represents an important event in New World history in North America (west wall), Brazil (east wall), Mexico and Central America (north wall), and South America (south wall). Like the Columbus Room, the white paneled ceiling is separated into panels by deep moldings, in which medallions encircle the letters “P” and “A,” representing Peace in the Americas. Metal wall sconces feature designs based on the Aztec calendar. Original to the room are its table of Dominican mahogany and

Rodriguez de Francia, Juan Rafael Morra, Francisco Morazán, José María Delgado, Jean-Jacques Dessalines.

¹³⁵ The hall has witnessed significant events in the history of the region.

¹³⁶ Before the panels were installed in the Governing Board Room, they were exhibited at the American Art Galleries in New York. It was the first and only solo exhibition of Farnham's work. The panels earned Farnham international acclaim and led to further commissions from South American republics. In 1916, the Government of Venezuela selected Farnham from a worldwide competition to execute an equestrian sculpture of Simón Bolívar for New York's Central Park. Michael P. Reed, “The Intrepid Mrs. Sally James Farnham: An American Sculptor Rediscovered,” *Aristos*, November 2007, www.aristos.org/aris-07/farnham.htm. That same year, the Republics of Bolivia and Peru asked her to create the marble busts of Sucre and Unanue, respectively, for placement in the Pan American Building's Hall of Patriots, <http://www.lehman.edu/vpadvance/artgallery/publicart/bio/farnham.html>.

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twenty-two high-backed Spanish leather chairs, each bearing the carved name and seal of an OAS member state.¹³⁷ The room still serves as meeting space.

The Leo S. Rowe Room (Service Room)

Located at the north end of the Gallery of Portraits hallway is this former service room that once was used for small meetings and has recently been converted to an office. Today it is named for Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan American Union, the precursor of the OAS, from 1920 until his passing in 1946. This is a carpeted and wood-paneled room with a drop ceiling.

The José Gustavo Guerrero Room (Stack Room)

Located north of the gallery corridor, this former stack room is used for numerous activities, primarily as an overflow meeting room. It is equipped with a large table, a modern audio system, and booths for interpretation essential to the most important meetings of the OAS, including the Permanent Council's when the Simón Bolívar Room is not available. It has a drop ceiling. Historically it accommodated a metal book shelving system.

THE BLUE AZTEC GARDEN

The rear terrace of the main building flows directly into the "Aztec Garden," also called the Pan-American garden by Albert Kelsey. Here a long blue tile mosaic reflecting pool is flanked by lawns and hedges.¹³⁸ At the pool's west end, a five foot high stone sculpture of Xochipilli—the Aztec god of flowers believed to have the power to grant or withhold fertility and good harvests—sits cross-legged on a pedestal. A contributing open stone fence surrounds the area's north, south, and west sides. Two fence panels, behind the Aztec god of flowers statue, feature a ceramic motif Kelsey got from a trip to the Yucatán. The image is of a jaguar head set on a disk-shaped stone found in Salvador surrounded by reptilian ornamentation. In his travel notes, Kelsey described how the sculptor and the potter "entered into the spirit of this unusual undertaking with the utmost intelligence and enthusiasm."¹³⁹ The garden aspect, as shown in circa 1920s to 1940s photographs, came from the lush greenery surrounding the pool and lily pads in the pool for a very tropical effect. It appears that over time the organization abandoned this lush landscaping in favor of a more minimal treatment. A May 1943 image of the pool area shows no seasonal vegetation. Overall, the pool, combined with the annex's loggia of Aztec tiling, adds to the property's Pan American ambiance.

Between the rear terrace of the main building and the pool is a rectangular gravel area spanning the width of the main building. Gravel paths extend along a band of grass along the north and south sides of the pool. No longer existing, as shown in the original plot plan and in a 1943 image, are the gravel paths that once continued in a north-south direction and angled outward back up to the gravel terrace. This removal slightly detracts from the formality of the formal design, but the overall intent of the plan remains. To the north and south sides of the wall, walkways extend from the gravel terrace up to the annex terrace.

A backdrop and terminus to the Aztec Garden is the annex building completed in 1912 as the Director General's residence. The building served as residence until 1976 when the interior was remodeled for the Museum of the Americas. The two-story building exhibits Mediterranean-style characteristics including the stucco walls, red-

¹³⁷ Original furnishings described in Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 139.

¹³⁸ Albert Kelsey, "Yucatecan Scenes and Sounds," an address given on March 19, 1918, before the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia, published 1530 Chestnut Street, 1919, <http://archive.org/details/yucatecanscenes00kelsrich>. Kelsey called the fence the "jade fence," perhaps due to plans to conceal green lights from a groove under the rail.

¹³⁹ Kelsey, "Yucatecan Scenes and Sounds," 37.

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tile hip roof, iron grilles, and balconied windows. Its most prominent feature, the so-called garden loggia, has inner walls lined with blue tile and bas-relief decorations. The original arched openings leading into the loggia were in-filled with glass doors while the interior tile work and decorations remain unchanged.

The loggia's airy grace opens onto the pool and provides a harmonious conclusion to the view from the main building. The brilliant blue-green tile wainscoting was designed to complement the ornamental reflecting pool. Its motifs are inspired by Mayan and Aztec decorative architecture. Within the loggia, the elaborate, polychrome-tile frieze illustrates birds and small animals taken from Incan textile designs. A corbel headset under the large beams was prepared from drawings of an ancient South American sculpture and a conventional serpent's tooth as seen at the "House of the Nuns" at Chichén Itzá, a pre-Columbian city in Mexico.¹⁴⁰ The three arched entries have two-story multi-pane French doors and side lights with an arch-shaped multi-light transom. The doors are not original; the loggia historically remained open to the outdoors. Atop the center door is a logo of the Americas. Flanking the entries are glass balconied doors on the first floor topped with a pediment with a shell inside. Paired 4/4 windows on the second floor feature carved double heads. A decorated eave surrounds the roofline.

The nonsymmetrical west front façade, facing 18th Street, reads as a building separate from the remaining parcel due to the surrounding bushes. All the windows are double-hung with 12/12 on the first floor and 4/4 on the second floor. A red tile portico is over the front door with a window above. Two small windows are to the left, and one large window is to the right. The north 3-bay side has three windows on the first floor and three on the second floor. The south side has a French door on the second floor with an iron balcony. The window on the first floor has side lights.

The annex, once the residence for the director, was converted to a museum in 1976. The interior finishes and functions have changed, but the floor plan appears to remain essentially intact. The exterior retains a majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of massing, spatial relationship, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation visible in the soffit, cornice, and window decoration. The most significant change was the glass enclosure of the original arched openings to the loggia, which disrupted the flow of the original intent to create a Pan American feeling in the setting. However, the original entry size remains the same and the glass material still allows one to perceive the original design intent for the loggia. The loggia décor remains visible from both inside and outside. No changes have been made to the loggia itself.

CASITA (MUSEUM ADMINISTRATION BUILDING)¹⁴¹

The casita is the museum administration building of the Museum of the Americas. It stands on the northwest corner of the property at 18th and C Streets, NW. Part of acclaimed American architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe's designs for the Van Ness family estate, this building was originally built in 1816 as a stable. A carriage bay, harness room, and various horse stalls divided the interior space. Latrobe designed an octagonal cupola for ventilation. During the 1908 construction of the Pan American Union Building, the stable was moved north to its present location. The stable initially served as a garage for the Pan American Union. The building was modified several times: Latrobe's original cupola was replaced with a taller version sometime before the building was relocated. After interior and exterior renovations in the 1980s, the structure, now called the casita, began housing the museum's administrative offices and workshop. The 1980s renovation included full interior reconfiguration, as well as the replacement of the historic standing seam metal roof, windows, and doors.

¹⁴⁰ Price, "The Pan American Union," 450.

¹⁴¹ This description was provided with appreciation by Molly Rick, intern, National Capitol Region, National Park Service.

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The stable is a two-story brick building with a hipped, pyramidal, standing seam metal roof and white stucco exterior walls. A small monitor with a pyramidal roof and louvers caps the structure. The roof features deep eaves with a single bed molding and an unadorned soffit. All windows are wood, double-hung sash that sit on wooden sills. The east and west elevations had arched bays that historic photos show contained double-leaf barn-style doors. These were variously infilled at the time the building was renovated to become the museum administration building. The bay placement, dimensions, and window and vent locations remain intact from the historic period.

The three-bay west elevation faces 18th Street. On the ground level, two six-over-six, double-hung wood sash windows flank a central double-leaf glass and vertical wood muntin door. The entrance is topped by a round arched window comprised of one, six-over-six, double-hung wood sash window framed by multi-light fixed windows. The window bays on either side of the door are inset approximately three to four inches from the wall face. The three-bay east elevation has three double-leaf openings topped by round-arch windows like the west elevation center bay. The center bay has solid vertical board doors. The flanking bays have glass and vertical wood muntin doors that match the entrance on the west elevation. The south elevation has three bays on the second floor filled by six-over-six, double-hung wood sash windows. Six small louvered openings are set low on the wall near the ground. These reputedly served as vents for horse stalls. The first and second stories on the north elevation contain three window bays filled by six-over-six, double-hung wood sash windows. The south and east elevations border an asphalt parking lot and a brick walkway flanks the west and north elevations.

LANDSCAPE

A tranquil landscape exists along the north and south sides of the main building, Aztec garden, and the annex that span east to west between 17th and 18th Streets. The parcel's abundant lawns, large trees, and modest landscaping create a tranquil oasis along the urban streetscape. Lawns with scattered mature trees line the property's north and south sides. Evergreen bushes on the north side of the pool visually separate a parking lot and the museum's administrative offices from the main building and annex. Sixteen statutes, between 2½ and 5 feet in height, are interspersed on the grounds around the main building. A September 19, 1908, drawing by Kelsey & Cret shows what Barrett describes as a "proposed final setting." Entitled, "Park of the International Bureau of the American Republics showing location for memorials, statues, fountains, gateways, etc.," the drawing shows a more formalized ground design to the sides of the main building, an oval shaped pool, an arched gateway where the annex is now located, and other features. This did not turn out to be the final setting, however it does indicate the potential for the addition of statues.¹⁴²

The circulation system consists of two driveways, gravel walkways, and a gravel terrace that are original to the design. The entry driveway off 17th Street is an inviting and sweeping semi-circular drive. A parallel parking area is located between the main building and the stairways that lead to a paved terrace next to 17th Street. A driveway running along the long north side of the main building angles downward from 17th Street to access the basement. A parking area exists on the northwest corner of the property and abuts the museum office building (former garage). A shrubbery hedge visually separates this parking area from the formal landscape plan between the main building and the annex.

¹⁴² Barrett, *Pan American Union*, 100.

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NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Noncontributing resources consist of exterior works of modern art and statutes. While many of these resources may have cultural, artistic or historic significance in other contexts, they do not (at present) add to the property's exceptional significance under National Historic Landmark Criteria 1 and 4.

Outdoor metal sculptures: Eleven works of contemporary outdoor metal sculpture and metal bicycles from New York State located on the southwest side of the property do not contribute to the significance of the property.

Outdoor sculptures: Sixteen sculptures on the perimeter grounds represent kings, heroes of independence, poets, leaders, thinkers, writers, and others who have marked the destiny and defined the characteristics of the vast and extensive Western Hemisphere. These artworks represent gifts from various countries, organizations, and individuals, or are works commissioned by the OAS Permanent Council.

List of Outdoor Sculpture:

- Cordell Hull, by Bryant Baker (United States) dedicated on April 14, 1956.
- The Prophet Daniel by "o Aleijadinho," Antonio Francisco Lisboa (Brazil), dedicated in 1962.
- Queen Isabella of Castile by José Luis Sánchez (Spain), dedicated on April 14, 1966.
- Rubén Dario by Juan José Sicre (Cuba), dedicated on January 18, 1967.
- José Cecilio del Valle by Juan José Sicre (Cuba), dedicated in December 1967.
- Amerigo Vespucci, by Greg Wyatt, dedicated on February 18, 2014.
- Eloy Alfaro, by Whitman Villalba, dedicated in 2007.
- Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz by Beatriz Caro (Mexico), dedicated on April 18, 1977.
- Rómulo Gallegos by Juan José Sicre (Cuba), dedicated in 1979.
- Gabriela Mistral by Galvarino Ponce (Chile), inaugurated on January 31, 2014, dedicated on November 21, 1980.
- Pablo Neruda by Galvarino Ponce (Chile), dedicated on November 21, 1981.
- The Liberator Simón Bolívar by Émile Antoine Bourdelle (France), dedicated on April 20, 1987.
- Teresa de la Parra by Manuel de la Fuente (Venezuela), dedicated on February 8, 1989.
- Inuksuk by Nunavut artist Peter Irniq, April 2010.
- The Poets' Bench, inaugurated on January 31, 2014.
- The Angel of Peace by José Toledo (Guatemala), 2014.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☒ Previously listed in the National Register (fill in 1 through 6 below)

☐ Not previously listed in the National Register (fill in **only** 4, 5, and 6 below)

1. NR #: 69000298
2. Date of listing: June 4, 1969
3. Level of significance: Not recorded on 1969 nomination
4. Applicable National Register Criteria: A ☒ B ☐ C ☒ D ☐
5. Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐
6. Areas of Significance: Commerce, Education, Politics/Government, Architecture, Social History

☐ Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register: Date of determination:

☐ Designated a National Historic Landmark: Date of designation:

☐ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: HABS No.

☐ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: HAER No.

☐ Recorded by Historic American Landscapes Survey: HALS No.

Location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office:

Other State Agency:

Federal Agency:

Local Government:

University:

Other (Specify Repository): Columbus Memorial Library, Organization of American States, Washington, DC;

Paul Philippe Cret Collection, University of Pennsylvania Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Photograph 1: View west to front façade facing 17th Street (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 2: View north to south side elevation, including statuary (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 3: View east to rear elevation (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 4: View west to front façade with statute of Queen Isabella (1966), (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 5: Detail of southernmost gated entry. (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 6: View of entrance hall looking south (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 7: View west looking into the patio showing Mayan-designed floor tiles, fountain, and corner planters (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 8: View from second floor to close-up of patio frieze with coats of arms of founding countries interspersed with names of important people. Above are the overhanging decorative roof eave and the glass roof (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 9: View looking south in the Simón Bolívar Room (former library) (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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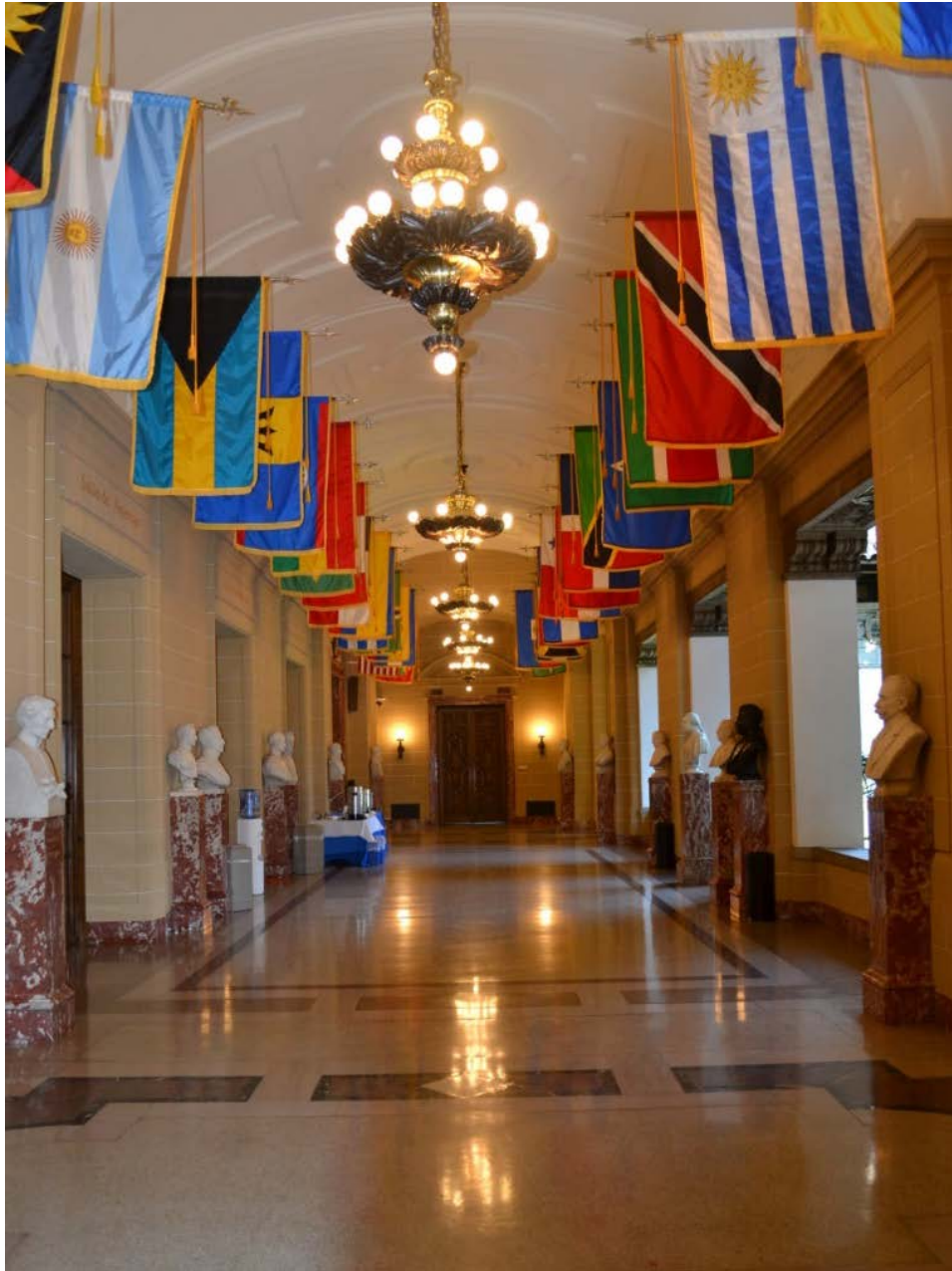
OMB Control No. 1024-0276 (Exp. 01/31/2019)

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Photograph 10: Gallery of Heroes. View to the north (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 11: View looking south in the Hall of the Americas showing vaulted central nave (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 12: View looking southwest. Francisco de Miranda Room (Governing Board Room) with gold brocade covered walls, twenty-two chairs of OAS member states, and gilt relief panels (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 13: Brazilian panel on the east wall of the Francisco de Miranda Room depicting “The Landing of Dom João, King of Portugal” (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 14: View looking west from the Pan American Union Building to the “Aztec Garden,” pool, and rear (east elevation) of the annex (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 15: View looking west showing Aztec god sculpture at pool, rear (east elevation) of the annex where arched openings lead into the loggia (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 16: View looking northeast at the annex west (front) and south sides (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 17: View looking south in the annex loggia. Frieze displays relief panels of Aztec figures (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 18: View of the Casita (former garage, now the museum administration building) looking northwest at the east and south elevations (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).



Photograph 19: View northwest of noncontributing modern sculpture located south of the pool; annex in background (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Photograph 20: View looking southeast from the main, west front steps of Pan American Union Building showing the setting (S. C. Salvatore, 2015).

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Constitution Ave NW & 17th St NW - Google Maps

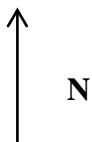


Figure 1: Map of Pan American Union Headquarters. Source: Google Maps.

Datum: WGS84

Latitude: 38.892227

Longitude: 77.039518



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Figure 2: Aerial view of the Pan American Union Headquarters. Source: Google Maps. Boundary: - - -



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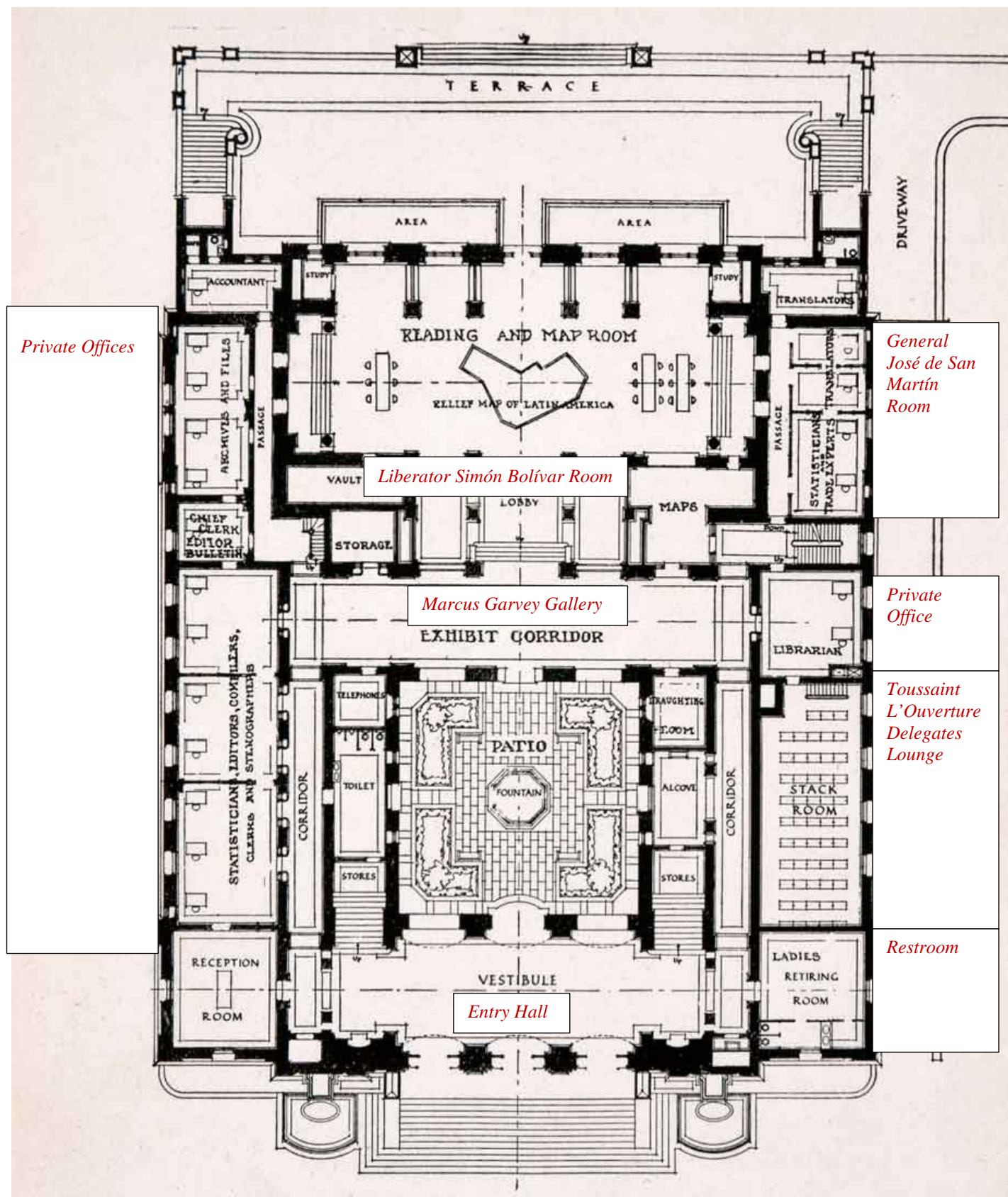


Figure 5: First floor plan of the Pan American Union Headquarters showing original room designations and current room designations in italics. Source: Barrett, *The Pan American Union* (1911), 92.

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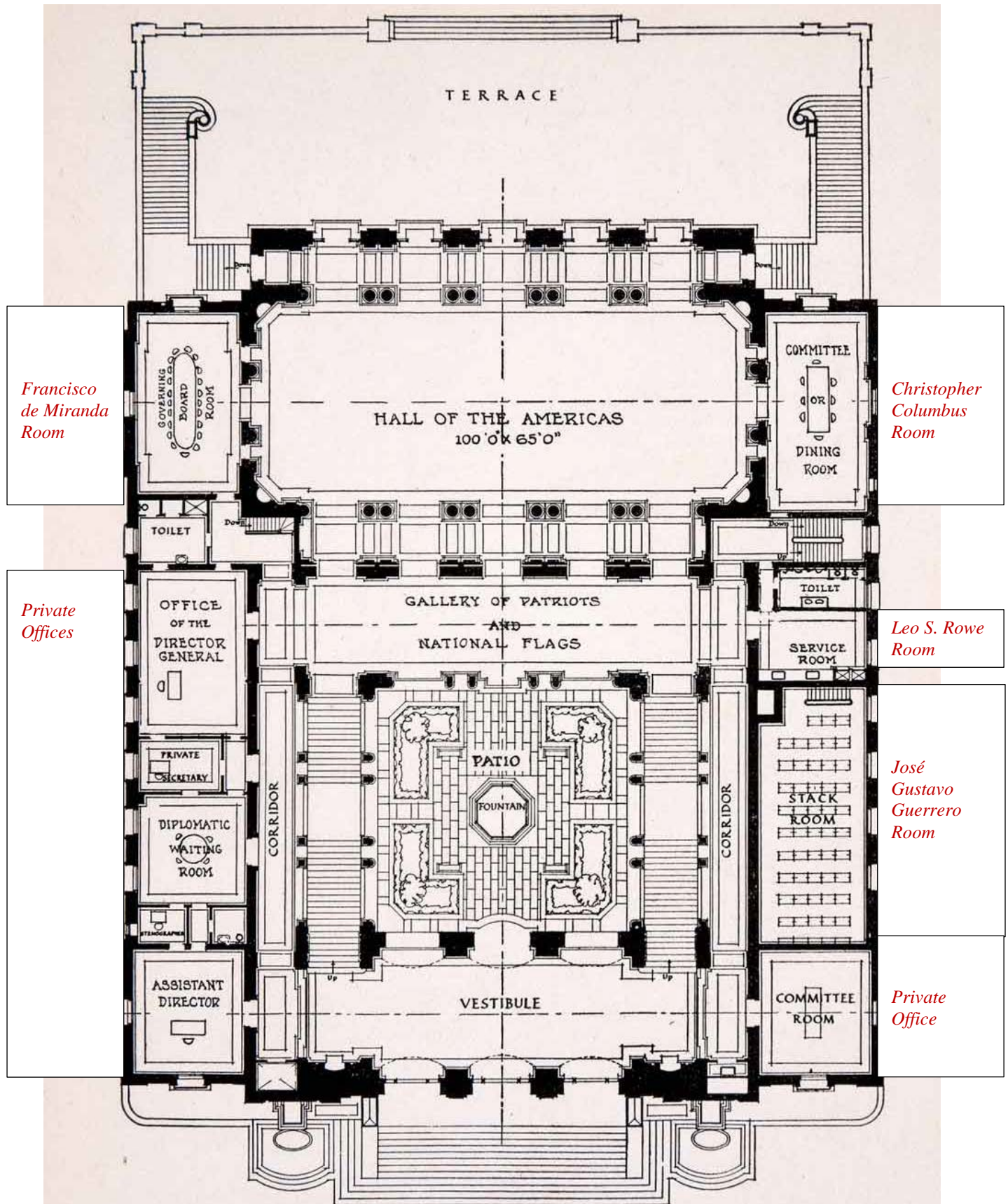


Figure 6: Second floor plan of the Pan American Union Headquarters showing original room designations and current room designations in italics. Source: Barrett, *The Pan American Union* (1911), 93.

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Historic Photo 1: Reading Room and Reference Library. Source: Barrett, *The Pan American Union* (1911), 149.



Historic Photo 2: Corner of stack room. Source: Barrett, *the Pan American Union* (1911), 150.

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Historic Photo 3: Offices. Source: Barrett, *The Pan American Union* (1911), 151.



Historic Photo 4: Offices. Source: Barrett, *The Pan American Union* (1911), 151.

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Historic Photo 5: Garden pool of Pan American Union Building showing lush tropical plantings, 1920. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Theodor Horydczak Collection, [LC-H824-T01-P02-001] .



Historic Photo 6: Garden of the Pan American Building. Plantings less lush. Collier, John, photographer, May 1943. Source: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [LC-DIG-fsac-1a55006].

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Historic Photo 7: View of one of the small doorways and window in the patio showing the original light configuration. Source: Barrett, *Pan American Union* (1911), 110.



Historic Photo 8: "Opening Session of the Conference of the Five Central American countries in the Hall of Americas, Pan American Building. The five countries represented are Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Between 1905 and 1941. Source: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, photograph by Harris & Ewing, [reproduction number, e.g., LC-USZ62-123456]"

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Historic Photo 9: Photograph of former garage, n.d. Source: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [LC-DIG-npcc-00071].